THE TAMILIAN ANTIQUARY

Editor
PANDIT D. SAVARIROYAN

THE TAMILIAN ANTIQUARY

The Tamilian Antiquary.

VOL. I.

No. I.

i. The Bharata Land or Dravidian India.

By V. J. Tambi Pillai Esq., M.R.A.

ii. The Solar and the Lunar Races of India.

By V.J. Tambi Pillai Esq., M.R.A.S.

iii. Ode to Cheraman-Udhiyan Cheralandan.

By K.G. Sesha Iyer Esq., B.A., B.L.,

iv. Notes: (1) The Relation of the Pandavas with the Tamilian Kings; and (2) the Etymology of the words Chera and Kerala.

By Pandit D. Savariroyan. M.R.A.S.

No. 2.

A Critical Review of the Story of the Ramayana and An Account of South Indian Castes (in Tamil).

By V.P. Subramania Mudaliar Esq., G.B.V.C.

With an Introduction (in English).

By J.M. Nallaswami Pillai Esq., B.A., B.L.

No. 3.

Some Mile-stones in the History of Tamil Literature, or, The Age of Jnana Sambandha.

By the late Prof. P. Sundaram Pillai. M.A.

With an Introduction *By Rai Bahadur V. Venkayya Avi., M.A.*

No. 4

An Inquiry into the date of Manikkavacager :

i. Manikkavacagar and His Date.

By K.G. Sesha Iyer Esq., B.A., B.A., B.L., M.R.A.S.

(2) Manikkavacagar and the Early Christians of Malabar.

By Ponnambalam Pillai Esq., M.R.A.S.

No. 5.

i. Glimpses of Ancient Dravidians.

By E.S.W. Senathi Raja Esq. LL.B., M.R.A.S.

ii. The Augustan Age of Tamil Literature.

By S. Krishnasawmi Aiyengar Esq., M.A., M.R.A.S.

iii. The Ten Tamil Idyls,

By the late Prof. P. Sundaram Pillai, M.A.

No. 6

Pura-porul (1) A summarised account of *Pura-Porul*: and (2) Selections translated from *Pura-nanuru*.

By the late Rev. G.U. Pope, M.A., D.D.

With an Introduction, *By J.M. Nallasurami Pillai Esq., B.A.,B.L.*

No. 7

Valmiki Ramayana and South Indian Sociology.
(A collection of seven learned essays on the subject).

No. 8

i. **Dravidian Kingdoms.**
By Dewan Bahadur T. Desikachariar B.A., B.L.

ii. **The Conquest of Bengal and Burma by the Tamils.**
By the late Mr. V. Kanakasabhi Pillai B.A., B.L.

iii. **Distribution of Races Round the Persian Gulf.**
By J.A. Saldana Esq., B.A., LL.B

iv. **Representative Institutions in Southern India,**
By T. Ponnambalam Pillai Esq., M.R.A.S.

v. **Laments.—Selections from Pura-Nanuru.**
By K.G. Sesha Aiyer Esq., B.A., B.L.

vi. **Serpent Workship in India.** *By M. Jivaratnam, Esq., B.A.*

vii. **The Ancient Dravidian Industries and Commerce.**
By the Pandit M. Raghava Aiyengar Avl.

No. 9

i. **Dravidian Kingdoms and List of Pandiyan Coins.**
By Dewan Bahadur T. Desikachariar. B.A., B.L.

ii. **Music in Ancient India.**
By C. Tirumalayya Naidu Esq, M.R.A.S.

iii. **The origin of the Cranganur (Kodungolur) Temple.**
By T. Ponnambalam Pillai Esq., M.R.A.S.

iv. **The Age of Pattupattu.**
By T.A. Ramalingam Chettiar Esq., B.A., B.L.

v. **Heroic Mothers of Ancient Tamilagam. (In Tamil)**
By Pandit M. Raghava Iyengar Avl.

No. 10

i. **The origin of the Tamil Vellalas.**
By V.J. Tamby Pillai, Esq., M.R.A.S.

ii. **The Poets of the Tamil Lands.**
By the late Rev. G.U. Pope, MA., D.D.

The Tamilian Antiquary

VOL. II.

No. I.

I. **An Old Tradition Preserved.**
By V.J. Tamby Pillai Esq., M.R.A.S.

II. **A Note on the Sangam Periods.**
By The Editor.

III. **The Antiquity of Nanjinad and Shenkottah.**
By T. Ponnambalam Pillai Esq., M.R.A.S.

IV. **Sage Pavananhi, Critic and Teacher.**
By M.S. Puranalingam Pillai Esq., B.A., L.T.

V. **Dravidian Coins.**
By Diwan Bahadur T.M. Rangachariar B.A. and
Diwan Bahadur T. Desikachariar, B.A., B.L., M.R.A.S.

VI. **The Kural.**
By The Rev. Dr. J. Lazarus.

VII. **A Chapter from the Kural.**
By J.M. Nallasamy Pillai Esq., B.A., B.L.

VIII. **The Tamils in the Epic Age. (Tamil)**
By Pandit M. Raghava Aiyanagar Avl.

IX. **Lanka and the Tamil Sangam (Tamil)**
By A. Muthuthamby Pillai Esq., Jaffna.

X. **Pandian Coins.**
By Diwan Bahadur T. Desikachariar B.A., B.L. M.R.A.S.

No. 2

1. **The Cholas and their Coinage**
   By Diwan Bahadur T. Desikachari, B.A., B.L., M.R.A.S.

2. **The Origin of the Word 'ARYA'**
   By V.J. Tamby Pillai, Esq., M.R.A.S., (Ceylon)

3. **The Canarese War**
   By Ponnambalam Pillai, Exq., M.R.A.S.

4. **Tamil Proverbs**
   By The Rev. Dr. J. Lazarus

5. **St. Thomas, the Apostle, and India**
   By Joseph C. Panjikaran, Esq., M.A.

6. **Vibhishnan Buddhi**
   By M.S. Purnalingam Pillai Esq., B.A. LT.

ASIAN EDUCATIONAL SERVICE
C-2/15, Safardarjung Development Area
New Delhi-110 016

THE TAMILIAN ANTIQUARY

Editor
PANDIT D. SAVARIROYAN

VOL – I
NO – III

ASIAN EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
New Delhi, 1986

ASIAN EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
C-2/15, SDA, P.B. No. 4534
New Delhi-110 016

Price : Rs. 720 (set)
Rs. 60 (No)
First Published : 1909
AES Reprint : 1986

Published by J. Jetley
For ASIAN EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
C-2/15, SDA, NEW DELHI – 110016
Printed at Konark Press
Lakshmi Nagar, New Delhi – 110092

SOME MILE-STONES

IN THE

History of Tamil Literature

OR

The age of Tirujnana-Sambandha

BY THE LATE

PROF. P. SUNDARAM PILLAY, M.A.,

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

RAI BAHADUR V. VENKAYYA AVL., M.A.,

Epigraphist to the Government of India

AND

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

BY

M. R. RY. K. G. SESHA AIYAR AVL., B.A., B.L.,

High Court Vakil, Trivandram.

PUBLISHED BY THE T. A. SOCIETY.

1909.

DEDICATED AS A MARK OF ESTEEM

TO

Dr. E. HULTZSCH,

The leader of Historic Research in

SOUTHERN INDIA.

Preface to the Present Edition.

No recent work of importance in the field of South Indian Archæology has so happily rewarded the hopes of its author as has Professor Sundaram Pillai's "*Some Mile-Stones in the History of Tamil Literature* or *The age of Tiru Jnana Sambandha.*" In offering to the public his conclusions on this most important question of South Indian Chronology he expressed the hope:

> "that other Tamil Scholars in the country with
> "better health and more leisure will interest them-
> "selves in such inquiries concerning their own
> "language and history, and push them on to wider
> "and more positive conclusions than I have been
> "here fortunate enough to reach. It is the hope of
> "stimulating such continued activity in however
> "small a degree on the part of a younger generation
> "that constitutes my main justification for this
> "republication."

And the essay concluded with the characteristic sentence:— "Not in vain, however, would this long and laboured essay prove, should the date, which it has all along sought to establish, be found to offer a foot-hold for scaling yet higher in the *neglected antiquities of an undeniably ancient and interesting people.*" In the decade and a half that has elapsed since the appearance of this work, not only a daily-growing interest has been manifested in the study of the ancient literature and inscriptions of South India, but the method and spirit of historic research and critical examination, that has made the Professor so distinguished and his works so valuable, are being slowly but eagerly assimilated by the younger generation. And subsequent researches have only borne testimony to the correctness of his conclusions which to-day serve the antiquarian as the *terra firma* on which he may take his stand and commence the scientific reconstruction of South Indian History.

Important alike to the historical student and the archæologist, the work, it is no wonder, should be in constant demand. The essay was long out of print and caused great inconvenience to those engaged in active research work. Partly to meet the general demand and partly to facilitate its own work, the Tamilian Archæological Society thought it desirable to issue a fresh edition. The Society is under deep obligations to Mr. S. Nataraja Pillai of Trivandram, son of the late Mr. P. Sundaram Pillai, for his generous courtesy and kindness in permitting it to reprint the work.

The special thanks of the Tamilian Archæological Society are due to M. R. Ry., Rai Bahadur, V. Venkayya Avl, M.A., Government Epigraphist, Simla, for the valuable introduction which in spite of his heavy and arduous official duties he has so kindly furnished us and to M. R. Ry. K. G. Sesha Aiyar Avergal, B.A., B.L., of Trivandram, for his interesting biographical sketch of the author.

The T. A. Society,
TRICHINOPOLY,
10th March 1909.

D. S.

A SHORT SKETCH

OF

Prof. P. SUNDARAM PILLAI M. A.

The late Professor P. Sundaram Pillai was born in 1855 in Alleppey, the principal seaport town in the Native State of Travancore. He belonged to a respectable Vellâla family. His father, Perumall Pillai, who was a trader in piece-goods, was characterised by strong common sense and deep piety; and young Sundaram received under him a careful training especially in Tamil sacred literature. He received his English education in His Highness the Maha Rajah's College, Trivandram, from which he graduated in 1876, standing first among the candidates from Trivandram, and fourth in the Presidency. Even as a student, his proficiency in Tamil, his mother tongue, and in Philosophy was remarkable. Soon after graduation, he became a teacher in his own College, where he was appointed to lecture to the Matriculation, F. A., and E. A., classes in history and the Junior B. A., class in Philosophy; and he soon acquired a name as almost a model teacher. His ability was so much appreciated that in 1877 he was, at the suggestion of Col. Mac Donald who was then the Director of Public Instruction, appointed Head Master of the Anglo-Vernacular School, Tinnevelly, which under him rose to the status of a second Grade College, since known as the Hindu College, Tinnevelly.

It was while in Tinnevelly that he knew and came under the influence of a great master of philosophy—Sri Sundara Swamigal of Kodaganallur–whose disciple he became, and to whose teaching he owed his intimate acquaintance with Hindu Philosophy. The speculative sciences had always

a fascination for Mr. Sundaram Pillai; and his close contact with this master-philosopher ripened and matured his essentially philosophic mind. The veneration in which he held this great ascetic will be patent from the fact that it is the memory of this great teacher that Mr. Sundaram Pillai has honoured in the saintly Sundarar of his *Manonmaniyam*. In 1879, when Dr. Harvey, the revered Professor of Philosophy in the Trivandram College, in whose classes Mr. Sundaram Pillai had studied western philosophy, proceeded to Scotland on furlough, Mr. Sundaram Pillai returned to Trivandram to act as Professor of Philosophy in his own College. In 1880, he took his M. A. Degree; and he remained in the Trivandram College till about the close of 1882, when he was taken into the administrative branch of the Travancore service as Peravagai Sheristadar or Commissioner of Separate Revenue. No wonder that the dull, not to say unedifying, realities of revenue administration, which

> Would not leave him in his wandering
> To seek for treasure in the jewelled skies,
> Albeit he soared with an undaunted wing,

failed to have any abiding attraction for the philosopher; and naturally in 1885, he once again went back to his old College as Professor of Philosophy, a position which he held with great honour to himself and infinite advantage and profit to young Travancore, till his death. As a teacher of philosophy, his fervour and enthusiasm were literally catching; and he actually revelled in his work. To his deep erudition and originality, he added a felicity of language and lucidity of exposition that were almost inimitable, and a wealth of thought and fund of genial humour that were inexhaustible.

While discharging the onerous duties of the chair of Philosophy, he managed to find time to study law and Dr. Ormsby then Professor of Law, and Judge of the Travancore High Court wrote to him as follows:—" You were one of my

very best pupils, and were frequently at the head of the class, and always did well." He also found leisure to do original work in the field of Tamil literature and literary history, and to make very valuable researches in the domain of ancient Travancore history. Of his *Manonmaniyam* I have written elsewhere as follows:—"If the historical significance of *Manonmaniyam*, its close correspondence with the highest and most finished models of dramatic art, its choice and chaste diction, its delightfully fresh and articulate style, its high poetic qualities, its dramatic beauty and its wealth of scientific and philosophic ideas, be not a sufficient recommendation to the Tamil reading public, we may also name the glamour of its allegory and purity of its teachings. It is altogether one of the healthiest and most suggestive books to be found in Tamil. It abounds in great thoughts felicitously expressed. Its lessons reach our hearts, inform our minds, quicken our finer sensibilities and elevate our whole moral being. Like all books of permanent value and excellence it 'brings sunshine to our hearts and dispels moonshine from our brains.'" His *நூற்றொகை விளக்கம்* which is an admirable introduction to the study of the sciences, is a model work in Tamil prose, which deserves to be better known and appreciated. Of his "Mile-stones in the History of Tamil Literature" nothing need be said here, except that it succeeded in procuring for him a large circle of sincere and admiring friends both in India and in Europe among scholars of established reputation; and a German University offered to confer on him the Degree of Ph. D., if he agreed only to put in a few months' attendance. It was also instrumental in procuring his election, at the suggestion of Sir. M. E. Grant Duff, as a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. The University of Madras, of which he was undoubtedly one of the best matured products, made him a Fellow of the University in 1891, and availed itself of his services as an Examiner in Tamil, History and Philosophy for several years. His archæological researches, embodied in his

"Early Sovereigns of Travancore" gained for him admission as a Member to the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland. In recognition of his signal services in the field of South Indian History the title of Rai Bahadur was conferred on him by the British Government in May 1896. Though strong in intellect Mr. Sundaram Pillay was never robust in constitution; and at the age of 42, he fell a victim to diabetic carbuncle, which on the 26th April 1897 snapt all too early the thread of his most useful life.

TRIVANDRAM,
19—2—09.

K. G. SESHA AIYAR.

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN Mr. Jivaratnam of the Madras Chief Secretariat asked me, on behalf of the Tamilian Archæological Society, if I would write an introduction to a fresh edition of the late Professor Sundaram Pillai's paper entitled "Some Milestones in the History of Tamil Literature," I agreed to the proposal and said I would gladly do it in case the Society could find no better person for the work. In fulfilment of this promise I append the following remarks as a tribute to the memory of a departed friend.

I presume I have been asked to write the introduction in expectation of my adding to the *Milestones* planted by my late friend. Though this expectation may not be fulfilled, the rough survey which I propose to make of recent researches in this branch of South Indian History may help others to plant more milestones without much hesitation. There are one or two points which require notice before we can proceed. The result arrived at by the late Mr. Sundaram Pillai is that "the opening of the seventh century is the latest period that can be assigned to Sambandha". The destruction of Vatapi by the Pallava king Narasimhavarman I. (mentioned in the Postscript) took place probably A.D. 642. It may be supposed that Tirujnanasambandhar met Siruttonda at Tiruchchengāttangudi when the events connected with the "destruction" of Vâtâpi were still fresh in the popular mind. In this case, we shall not be far wrong if we assign Tirujnanasambandhar to the middle of the seventh century A.D.

The date originally assigned by Dr. Hultzsch for the construction of the Kailasanatha temple at Conjeevaram, *viz.*, A.D. 550 has been altered by Dr. Fleet who has pointed out

that the Pallava King Rajasimhavarman must have lived about the end of the 7th or beginning of the 8th century A.D. Consequently, the temple * could not be mentioned either by Tirunavukkarasar or Tirujnanasambandhar.

The date of Mànikkavàsagar is, to my mind, not quite satisfactorily settled. From two references to the Pandya king Varaguna in the *Tiruchchittambalakkovai* I tentatively assigned the saint to the middle of the 9th century. The existence of earlier Pandya kings bearing the name Varaguna is not precluded. Consequently, the tentative date assigned by me may have to be altered in the light of future researches. Attempts have been made to explain away the absence of any reference to Manikkavasagar in the *Tiru-Thonda-Thogai* of Sundaramurti Nàyanàr. Mr. K. G. Sesha Aiyar who assigns Manikkavasagar to the 4th century A.D. has called in question the authority of Nambi Andàr Nambi for the explanation of the term *Poyyadimai-illâda-pulavar* which occurs in the *Tiru-Thonda-Thogai.* I am not quite prepared to follow Mr. Sesha Aiyar in thus overthrowing the tradition current at the time of Nambi Andàr Nambi. This, however, is not the place to discuss in full the date of Manikkavasagar.†

The battle of Talaiyàlangànam described in the *Maduraik-kânji* is mentioned in the larger Sinnamanur plates of the Pandya king Rajasimha, though this reference does not help us to fix the date of the battle. The ancient Pandya king Palsâlai-mudukudumi-Peruvaludi is also referred to in the same poem as an ancestor of Nedunjeliyan, the victor at Talaiyalanganam. The former is mentioned in the Vêlvikudi grant of the Pandya king Nedunjadaiyan. The foundation of the Tamil *sangam* figures among the feats of

---

* It is just possible that the Kailasanatha was the temple, which, according to the *Periyapuranam*, was built at Conjeevaram by a Kadava (*i. e.*, Pallava) king during the life time of the Saiva devotee Pûsalâr Nayanar.

† [The subject will receive full discussion in the next issue of the Society. d.].

unnamed ancient Pandya kings * in the larger Sinnamanur plates. No reference is however made here to the three *sangams* known to literary tradition.

---

* The ancient Tamil poems *Silappadigâram*, *Manimêgalai*, *Pattuppâttu*, *Purananuru* and others have been assigned to the 2nd century A.D. The antiquity of the tradition connecting individual pieces of the last two poems with particular kings cannot be very high. A tentative date for the Chola king Karikala who figures in these poems can be made out as follows: In Telugu-Choda inscriptions of the 11th century A.D. Karikala is said to have got Trilochana Pallava and other kings to build the banks of the river Kâveri. This Trilôchana Pallava is perhaps identical with his Namesake who fought against the Chalukia king Vijayâditya. Vijayâditya was an ancestor of the Eastern Chalukya king Kubja-Vishnuvardana removed from him by four generations. This would yield the beginning of the 6th century roughly for the period of Karikala.

[The tentative date ascribed above to Karikala is, we fear, far from accurate. There were, no doubt, many Karikalas in the land and several repairs too to the banks of the Kaveri river. But the Karikala of the Tamil classics is identical with the celebrated Karikala I, the hero of Pattinapalai, Porunarathuppadai and several lyrics in Purananuru. The date assigned to him, by the learned author of the " Tamils 1800 Years Ago," is A.D. 55–95. The correctness of the date is corroborated by the ancient literary works of Tamil and supported by the historical records of Ceylon.

It is evident from the Tamil literature (1) that Karikala I. was a great conqueror whose conquests extended even to foreign countries; (2) he was the father-in-law of the Chera king, Cheraladan, the father of Chenkuttuvan, whose brother was the reputed author of the epic 'Silap' in which the deification of Kannagi is described; (3) he was an ancester of Ko-Chengannan referred to in the songs of Appar of the 7th century; (4) he raised the banks of the river Kaveri by labour of the conquered people; (5) Besides, it is stated in 'Silap' that Gajabahu, King of Ceylon, was present at the inaugural worship of Kannagi or Patthini by Chera king, Chen-Kuttuvan, above referred to and that Gajabahu introduced the cult into the island on his return.

Now, according to the histories of Ceylon, there are two Gajabahus; the second of whom lived so late as the 12th century A.D. and so cannot be a contemporary of an ancester of Ko-Chengannan referred to by Appar's Songs. Therefore, the one Gajabahu who was contemporary of Chenkuttuvan should be Gajabahu the first. In them, mention is made of the invasion of Ceylon by Chola kings during the three years of Gajabahu's father's reign and the carrying off of 1,200 Singalese captive to their country to be employed at the work on the banks of the river Kaveri. The Cholas were so powerful as to exact work from the Singalese by turns, until Gajabahu rebelled against it. The introduction of the worship of Patthini into the Island is also ascribed to Gajabahu I.

Thus we are forced to conclude that the Gajabahu of the 'Silap' who was a contemporary of Chen-kuttuvan must be the 1st Gajabahu of Ceylon whose age is established beyond doubt to be the beginning of the 2nd century A. D. The date of Karikala I. the grand-father of Chen-kuttuvan, should, therefore, be sought in the 1st century of the Christian era.—Ed.]

In the larger Sinnamanur plates a translation of the *Mahabharata* is said to have been made during the reign of one of the unnamed ancient Pandya kings. This was perhaps earlier than Perundevanar's *Bharatavenba* which seems to have been composed during the reign of the Pallava king Tellâtterinda Nandippòttaraiyan. The latter must have flourished about the end of the 8th, or beginning of the 9th century A.D. The period when the Tamil poet, Kamban, composed his *Ramayanam* remains unknown. Epigraphical researches have brought to light a later translation of the *Mahabharata* which has not been so far traced in manuscripts.† This translation is referred to in a Tiruvàlangàdu inscription of Kulôttunga III. (A.D. 1178–1216).

Prof. Sundaram Pillai does not appear to have entertained any high regard for Vaishnava traditions. But there is very little doubt that of the Vaishnava saints *(âlvars)* lived in very early times. I have tentatively assigned the latest of them, *viz.* Tirumangai-Alvar to the third quarter of the 8th century A.D. The other alvars who, according to Vaishnava tradition, were prior to Tirumangai, must have flourished in earlier times. Tirumalisai-Alvar probably lived during the period of Pallava supremacy. A hymn of Kulasêkhara-Alvar is referred to in a Srirangam inscription of Kulôttunga I. (A.D. 1070-1118) and the compositions of Pûdattâlvar and Poygai-Alvar are referred to in a Conjeeveram epigraph of Vikrama-Chola (A.D. 1118-35). The acharya Nâdamunigal probably flourished in the 11th century A. D., while the great Vedantadêsika belonged to the 14th century A. D. A Sanskrit verse alleged to have been composed by the latter is found engraved on the east wall of the second *prakara* of the Ranganatha temple at Srirangam together with another verse and coupled with Saha-samvat 1293 = A.D.1371-2.

† The fate of another Tamil work mentioned in one of the Tanjore inscriptions is also unknown. This is the drama entitled *Rajarajêsvara Nadagam*. In an inscription of Parakêsarivarman Rajendradéva, provision is made for a daily allowance of paddy to a troupe of actors who had to perform the drama.

As regards later Saiva literature, the dates of Nambi Andâr Nambi and of Sêkkilar remain to be fixed by future researches. The former was patronised by the Chola king Rajaraja Abhaya Kulasekhara, whose identity with any of the kings known from epigraphical records has yet to be disclosed. Sekkilar was perhaps a protege either of Kulôttunga II. or of Kulôttunga III.

The author of the Tamil lexicon *Sûdâmaninigandu*, Mandalapurusha, was a disciple of the Jaina preceptor Gunabhadra. Mr. T.S. Kuppusamy Sastri of the Madras Educational Department has shown with the help of extracts from Jaina works that Gunabhadra was a contemporary of the Rashtrakûta king Akâlavarsha (Krishna II). Accordingly, his disciple Mandalapurusha probably refers to the Râshtrakûta king Krishna II. when he talks of the unbounded liberality of Kiruttinarâya in explaining the term *kodaimadam.* Consequently, the lexicon Sûdâmaninigandu was probably compiled in the 9th century A. D. In this case, the two lexicons *Divâkaram* by Sêndan and *Pingalandai* by Pingala which are both mentioned in the *Sûdâmani-Nigandu* must have been compiled by earlier authors.

As regards grammar, the date of the *Vîrasôliyam* has been fixed. It was composed by the Buddhist author Buddhamitra during the reign of the Chôla king Virarajendra. This is evidently the Chola king Rajakêsarivarman Vîrarajendra I. who bore the surnames Rajasraya, Cholakula-Sundara, Vira-Chola and Karikala-Chola. He reigned from A.D. 1063 until about A.D. 1070. The commentary which accompanies the text of the *Vîrasôliyam* was evidently later. One of the sutras of this grammar is said to have been quoted on the occasion of the first exposition in public of the *Skandapuranam.* It is therefore evident that this Puranam must be later than the *Virasoliyam*, unless it is argued that a long interval elapsed between the composition of the Puranam and its formal exposition in public. It is here worthy of note that the *Skandapuranam* is alleged to have been translated by Kachchiyappa-

Svamigal in the year Saka 700 = A.D. 778. An important milestone in the history of Tamil literature is the date of composition of the grammar *Nannul* by the Jaina preceptor, Pavanandi, (*i.e.*, Bhavanandin) under the patronage of a Ganga king named Sîyagangan who appears to have been a contemporary of the Chola king Kulottunga III.

Before closing this necessarily brief survey of early Tamil literature, it is necessary to draw attention to an important fact disclosed by epigraphical researches. The extent of the Tamil country (*i. e.* the tract of country in which the language was commonly spoken or understood) during the period of Chola supremacy and of the subsequent Pandya ascendancy was bigger than in later times. The traditional boundary of the Tamil country in the north is Vêngadam, *i. e.* Tirupati in the North Arcot District. A considerable portion of the modern Mysore State, where the prevailing language is at present Kanarese, was for a pretty long period occupied by the Chôlas. As a result of this occupation or owing to some other cause which it is at present difficult to ascertain, Tamil became the language of epigraphical records for some time. Similarly, in the northern part of the North Arcot District and in the southern portion of the Nellore and Cuddapah Districts, where Telugu is now the prevailing language, Tamil appears to have taken its place. Several Chola inscriptions in the Tamil language and alphabet have also been discovered in the island of Ceylon. Again at Loboe Tœwa, Paros, Sumatra, has been found a Tamil inscription dated in the Saka year 1010 = A.D. 1088. It records a gift by a body of persons who are styled "the one-thousand five hundred." This epigraph proves that the Tamil language was used in public documents on the island of Sumatra in the 11th century A.D. Accordingly, the influence which the Tamilians and their language exercised is much greater than its traditional boundaries would warrant us to believe.

Camp, VELLORE,
30—12—1908.

V. VENKAYYA.

PREFACE.

With the exception of a few paragraphs, this pamphlet is substantially a reprint of what appeared in the last few issues of the Madras *Christian College Magazine* for **1891**, under the title of "*The age of Tirujnana Sambandha "—a question of South Indian Archæology*—and my thanks are, therefore, due to the conductors of that periodical for so readily acceding to my request, when, pressed by a few earnest Tamil Scholars here and there for copies of the original issues or reference, I applied to them for permission to republish the paper.

I owe it to Dr. E. Hultzsch to acknowledge that the inception of this dissertation is due entirely to him. But for his frequent and encouraging inquiries, it would never have been written. Having ventured to ascribe a higher antiquity to *Sambandha* than usual, in a review of the *Ten Tamil Idylls* in the Magazine above named, I was asked to support my statement with facts, and in my endeavours to do so, ensued this essay.

I am glad to acknowledge my obligations also to T. Ramanatha Aiyar, B.A., L.T., of Patcheappah's College, Madras who though unknown to me, spontaneously offered to help me in any literary venture I might have in hand, and gladly undertook to go through the proofs ; and how carefully he has done it, it is needless for me to say.

Though it is now more than four years since this essay was written, I have not met with anything to alter the views expressed in it. A doubt, however, has arisen as to the priority of Manikavasagar to Sambandha, and it has been daily gaining ground, particularly after I had the pleasure of hearing from Advocate C. Brito of Ceylon—another zealous

and generous friend of Tamil letters. But I have not altered the incidental expression indicating their relative age in the essay for two reasons:—1st, it does not affect the general line of argument followed in it, and 2nd, the subject deserves an independent handling.

In conclusion, I beg to express my earnest hope that other Tamil scholars in the country, with better health and more leisure, will interest themselves in such inquiries concerning their own language and history, and push them on to wider and more positive conclusions than I have been here fortunate enough to reach. It is the hope of stimulating such continued activity in however small a degree on the part of a younger generation that constitutes my main justification for this republication.

HARVEYPURAM,
Trivandram,
24th March, 1895.

P. SUNDARAM PILLAY.

SOME MILE-STONES

IN THE

HISTORY OF TAMIL LITERATURE

OR

THE AGE OF TIRU JNANASAMBANDHA.

AMONG the Saiva community of Southern India, no name is held in greater veneration than that of Tirujnanasambandha. By the Saiva community, I mean the Hindus that regard Siva as the head of the Hindu trinity. Saivas, in this sense, form the bulk of the population in the districts of Tinnevelly, Madura, Trichinopoly, Tanjore, South Arcot, Chingleput, Madras, North Arcot, Salem, and Coimbatore, and are also found in large numbers in certain parts of Ceylon, Malabar. and Travancore,—in short, wherever Tamil is the prevailing tongue. The Kanarese people are also more or less exclusively Saivas; but they adopt a bigotted form of the common faith, and are therefore known as **Vira-Saivas or Lingayats.** Among the Brahmans too, there is a section specially called Saivas, and the vast majority of the rest, though known as Smartas, venerate Saiva traditions and ceremonials, and are Saivas to all appearance.* For all the Saivas, and particularly for the non-Brahmanical Tamil Saivas, Tirujnanasambandha is the highest authority, and his works have all the sanctity of the *Vedas*.

---

* For instance, they use holy ashes, *rudraksha* beads, etc.

The Tamil Saivas have their own system of sacred literature, compiled and arranged so as to match the *Vedas, Puranas,* and *Sastras* in Sanskrit. **The hymns of Sambandha,** togeather with a few other songs, are in fact known as the **Tamil Vedas.** These hymns and songs were compiled and arranged into eleven groups, or **Tirumurai,** by one **Nambi Andar Nambi,** a Brahaman priest of Tirunâraiyur in the Tanjore district,—the sovereign who patronized this Tamil Vyasa being **Rajaraja Abhaya Kulasekhara Chola,*** as will be seen further on. Of these eleven collections or *Tirumurai*, the first three contain the hymns of Sambandha, and the next three those of a Vêlala saint, called **Appar or Tirunavukkarasu,** an elder contemporary of Sambandha, and an earnest and pathetic writer, whose thorough renouncement of Buddhism† seems to have been the first of the irreparable reverses which that religion experienced in Southern India. The seventh comprises the rather humorous **hymns of Sundara,** a Brahman devotee of a later generation.‡ These seven collections form the compilation called **Devaram,** also known as **Adangal-Murai,** and are perhaps meant to match the hymns of the earlier portions of the *Vedas,* which they closely resemble in being but praises and prayers offered to the deity. They are used also, much in the same way as the Vedic hymns, on ceremonial and religious occasions. The mere learning of them by rote is held to be a virtue, and special provision is made in respectable Saiva temples, throughout the Tamil districts, for their public recitation after the daily *pujas,* by a class of Vêlala priests, called **Oduvar.** The earlier

---

* See the *Tirumurai-kanda-Puranam,* verse 2.

† Under the term Buddhism, I include all forms of anti-Vêdic heresy that prevailed in this age. Though they differed among themselves, all the schismatics, known variously as Kshapanas, Bauddhas, Jainas, Thêras, Sakyas, Arugar, etc., were at one in rejecting the authority of the *Vêdas.* Useful pieces of interesting information may be gathered from the *Dêvara* hymns concerning all the sects of South-Indian Buddhists.

‡ See the *Tirmurai-kanda-Puranam,* verse 16.

work,* the **Tiruvasagam**, forms a part of the eight *Tirumurai* or collection. It is perhaps intended to take the place of the *Upanishads*, and there is decidedly no work in the Tamil language more deserving of that distinction. There are, indeed, but few poems in any language that can surpass the *Tiruvasagam* or 'the holy word' of **Manikkavasagar** in profundity of thought, in earnestness of feeling, or in that simple childlike trust, in which the struggling human soul, with its burdens of intelectual and moral puzzles, finally finds shelter. The hymns of nine other minor authors, composed in apparent imitation of the *Devara* hymns, make up the ninth group called **Tiru-Isaippa**. Among these nine authors was a **Chola king named Kandaraditya**,† and I am glad to find his name in Dr. Hultzsch's table of Chola kings,‡ as the one, from whom Rajaraja, who ascended the Chola throne in 984-85 A.D.,¶ was the fifth in succession. The tenth collection contains the mystic songs of an old *Yôgin*, called **Tirumular**. The eleventh and last evidently looks like a supplement, and was perhaps intended to provide room for all other sacred writtings current at the time. It embraces a number of miscellaneous treatises, some ascribed to **Nakkirar** of the old Madura college. The last ten pieces in the eleventh *Tirumurai* were written by Nambi Andar Nambi himself; and of these ten pieces, the third or the **Tiruttondar Tiruvandadi** forms the basis of the Tamil *Purana*, popularly called the **Periyapuranam**; and this completes the analogy we have drawn between Nambi Andar Nambi and Vyasa,—the compiler of the Aryan *Védas* and the supposed author of all *Puranas*. These

---

* The priority of Manikkavasagar is generally accepted only on tradition, and on the genealogy of the Pandyas given in the Madura *Sthala-Purana*. Better evidence is found in the *Dêvaram* itself. See verse 2, page 652 of Ramaswami Pillai's edition, where Appar directly alludes to a miracle ascribed to Manikkavasagar.

† See verse 10 of his *Tiru-Isaippa*.

‡ *South-Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. I, p. 112.

¶ See *ante*, Vol. XXIII, p. 297, and *Ep. Ind.* Vol. IV, p. 68.

eleven collections, together with the *Periyapuranam,* make up the sacred literature of the Saivas, if we put aside the works of the Santâna-Acharyas, called *Siddhanta-Sastras,** fourteen in number and professedly philosophical. These last correspond to the *Vêdanta-Sutras* and their commentaries, which, though not looked upon as revealed, form still an integral portion of the sacred Sanskrit writings.

From this short account, it must be clear what position **Tirujnanasambandha** holds among the Tamilar as a religious teacher. He is decidedly the greatest and most popular of the Tamil *Rishis.* There is scarcely a Saiva temple in the Tamil country where his image is not daily worshipped. In most of them, special annual feasts are held in his name, when the leading events of his life are dramatically represented for the instruction of the masses. All classes of poets, from his colleagues Appar and Sundarar to the latest of *Purana*-writers, from the purest of Vedantists like **Tattuvarayar**† to the most uncompromising of dualists like **Arul Nandi Sivacharya,** from the iconoclastic **Kannudaiya Vallalar**‡ to the **Vira-Saiva Sivaprakasa,** unite in invoking his spiritual aid at the commencement of their literary labours. Indeed any Tamil scholar ought to be able, at short notice, to compile a goodly volume of the encomiums paid to the memory of this religious teacher by an appreciative posterity.

---

* Umapati Sivacharya was the last of the four Santâna-Acharyas, for whom the Saiva Calendar provides an annual fast-day. They constitute, together with the devotees whose lives are described in the *Periyapuranam,* the canonized saints of the Saivas.

† This excellent poet and subtle metaphysician deserves more attention than he now generally receives.

‡ The only work of this author now extant, called *Olivilodukkam,* is an endless mine of what Dr. Bain calls "intellectual similes." Compared with his merciless sarcasms on all kinds of idolatry, the words of Sivavakyar and others, so frequently quoted, are the tamest of jejune platitudes. The author of the Tamil Plutarch does not mention this writer. He mistakenly ascribes his work to Santalingar, of a totally different school.

Even as a poet, Sambandha has more than ordinary claims to be remembered. His hymns, of which three hundred and eighty-four *padigams** or more than 19,000 lines are now extant, are models of pure and elevated diction, generally earnest and touching, but always melodious and well-turned. Most of them appear to have been uttered impromptu; and all of them, being lyrical, are set to music. The original tunes are now mostly forgotten. They were lost in the later airs introduced by the Aryan musicians of the north. Some of the old names† are still retained; but it is difficult to believe that they denote, in the new system, the same old Dravidian melodies. The very instrument upon which these melodies were played, namely the *yâl,* is so completely forgotten that no small difficulty is felt in following the descriptions of it in such ancient classics as the *Ten Idyls* and the *Silappadigaram.* The *vînai* now in use would appear to be of quite a different structure.‡ The melody of some of the hymns of Sambandha, therefore, may not be fully realised, since the tunes to which they were set are now lost. Taken all in all, Sambandha must be reckoned as a great genuine Tamil poet, certainly the greatest in the lyrical department. It is a pity that he composed nothing in any other line. With his masterly command over the language and his marked individuality, he might have left behind more imposing monuments of his genius in the epic or the dramatic line, if his vocation and circumstances had permitted him the requisite leisure.

But, evidently, his time was otherwise fully engaged. His life is narrated at great length, in the *Periapuranam,* but scarcely with such particulars as a modern historian

---

* A *padigam* is a collection of ten stanzas. Sambandha generally adds an eleventh, giving his own name, etc.

† Such as the tunes now called *kurunji, kolli,* etc.

‡ The *Tiruvasagam* distinguishes the *vinai* from the old *yal.* So also do the *Kalingattu Parani* and other works of the middle ages.

would care to have. He was born of good Brahman parents of the Kaundinya *gotra* at Srikali or Shiyali, a few miles to the South of Chidambaram. His father bore the name of Sivapâdahridaya, and his mother was called Bhagavati. Evidently, they had no other children. At the age of three, Sambandha, who was then called Pillai or Aludaiya Pillai, accompanied his father, one morning, to the bathing *ghat* of the local temple tank. Busy with his own ablutions, the father forgot the presence of his son; and the boy, left to himself, cried and wept, and called to his mother. The local goddes heard the cry, and appearing before the boy, gave him a cup of her own milk. The boy drank the holy draught, and forthwith became Tirujnanasambandha, or 'the one related to (the godhead) through wisdom.' In the meantime, the father having finished his ablutions, came up to his boy, and wished to know about the cup in his hand. The child broke out into verse, and pointing to the divine figure, still but vanishing through the sky, proclaimed the source of the gift. The hymn still exist, and is the very first of the compilation called *Devaram,* but it seems to give no support to the miracle narrated. Probably, Sambandha's was one of those cases of marvellous precocity now and then puzzling psychologists; and no doubt, he was born poet who 'lisped in numbers, for the numbers came.' Anyhow, after declaring himself to be of the elect, Sambandha could find no rest. Crowds of people came to have a look at the prodigy and to invite him to their villages. He responded to their calls, and commemorated his visit by composing a hymn of ten stanzas in praise of Siva and the village visited.

It was while he was thus travelling about, raising unbounded admiration among the people, and securing the staunch support of the leading men of his age,* that an invi-

* Six of these are expressly mentioned: Tirunavukkarasu, his fellow hymn-maker; Siruttondar, Tirunilanakkar, Murugar, and Tirunilakanda Yalppanar, who accompanied Sambandha for the rest of his life, playing on his matchless *yal* every hymn his youthful master produced.

tation from **Mangaiyarkkarasi, the queen of Kun Pandya** of Madura, reached him at **Vedâranyam.** The Pandya had been converted to Jainism, but **his queen** and his **minister, Kulachchirai,** retained their traditional faith; and wishing to reclaim their sovereign, they naturally looked to Sambandha, the marvel of the age. Nor was he slow to respond. Though the *Purana* records no previous conflict with the Buddhists, it is clear from the uniform imprecations pronounced upon them in every one of his hymns—not even the first excepted—that he must have already encountered them frequently in the course of his incessant movements. It is, therefore, not unlikely that Sambandha was anxiously looking out for an opportunity for a decisive trial of strength. The invitation was accordingly accepted with alacrity, and the champion of the Saiva faith appeared in Madura. It would be interesting to get an historical account of the meeting of the two opposing creeds of the time at the court of the Pandya. That there was such a meeting is beyond all dispute. Of this, the hymns connected with the proceedings at the meeting, bear ample, and so far as I can see, unquestionable evidence. But of the debate we have no particulars; the story is replete only with miracles. Suffice it to say that **the Buddhists were routed, and that Kun Pandya was duly reconverted to the Saiva faith.** This event is the most important historical fact connnected with Sambandha's life. After re-establishing the traditional faith in Madura, he recommenced his travels. He appears to have been an indefatigable traveller, and to have visited almost every town and every village of any consequence then in the Tamil districts.† A marriage was at last proposed and settled with the daughter of a pious Brahman called Nambândâr,* but, at the end

† There exist hymns commemorating his visit to more than 200 places, mostly in the Tanjore district.

* The author of the *Tamil Plutarch* mistakes Nambandar for Nambi,—Andar Nambi quite a different person.

of the wedding, a miraculous **fire appeared, in answer to** the prayers of the bridgroom, **and all present, including the** married couple, says the *Purana*, **departed this life to heaven.**

Thus the life of Sambandha begins and ends with miracles.† But in spite of these supernatural elements, it is impossible not to see in him a powerful historical personality. If the **downfall of Buddhism, at least in the Tamil districts, can be ascribed to one individual more than to another, that individual is Jnanasambandha.** That he looked upon the final overthrow of the Jainas and the Buddhists as the one object of his life will appear from every one of his numerous hymns, the tenth verse of which is uniformly devoted to their condemnation. Even after his glorious victory over them at Madura, the habit of cursing them is continued, shewing that the schismatics, however vanquished, had still a hold on the land. An express mention of a subsequent debate at Telichchêri is also met with. But from Kun Pandya's conversion may be dated the downfall of Buddhism. Buddhism never regained its lost prestige, and by the time of Nambi Andar Nambi, *i. e.* the eleventh century, it was practically extinct in the Tamil country.

It is difficult, at this distance of time, to understand why so implacable a hatred was implanted against the Jainas in the heart of our otherwise amiable author. The religion of Aruga must have deteriorated, no doubt, a good deal, after it got itself established under Asoka in the north and equally powerful potentates in the south. Religious sects, like political parties, are generally good and promising only till they attain to power. However corrupted the creed of Gautama had become, that fact alone could not have been the sole

---

† It is but just to add that some of these do find support in the *Dêvara* hymns. There is clear evidence to prove that Sambandha believed in his own powers to work miracles.

ground of Sambandha's intolerance, or the sufficing cause of its rather rapid downfall and disappearance. With the hopelessly impenetrable darkness that envelopes the history of this period, it is idle to open such questions. We should rejoice, if we could, with any tolerable certainty, determine what that period itself was.

It is scarcely possible to conceive greater confusion than that which prevails with reference to the question of **the age of Sambandha.** Mr. Taylor places Kun Pandya, and therefore Sambandha also, who converted him, about 1320 B.C.,* while Dr. Caldwell contends that he was reigning in 1292 A.D. Thus it would appear possible to assign Sambandha to 1300 B.C. or A.D. indifferently! This is certainly very curious: and I am not sure whether we can find the like of it in the whole range of history. Indeed, it would seem that South-Indian chronology has yet to begin its existence. We have not, in fact, as yet, a single important date in the ancient history of the Dravidians ascertained and placed beyond the pale of controversy. It is no wonder, then, that, in the absence of such a sheet anchor, individual opinions drift, at pleasure, from the fourteenth century B.C. to the fourteenth century A.D.! I am not sure whether even the conditions under which South-Indian chronology has to proceed have themselves been sufficiently attended to. Whatever else there exists or not of the ancient Dravidian civilization, there exists the Tamil language with its various dialects, including the classical dialect, now gone out of use, and the extensive literature written in that dialect. A critical study of this dialect and of this literature would certainly, under ordinary circumstances, be held as a pre-requisite for conducting South-Indian antiquarian researches. But, unfortunately, for reasons that cannot be here explained, critical scholarship in Tamil has come to be regarded as not so essential to those

---

* Nelson's *Madura Country*, Part III. Chapter II. p. 55.

researches.* Hence the absurdities that we sometimes meet with in the writings of those whose oracular utterances pass in certain quarters for axiomatic truths. For instance, Dr. Burnell, in an otherwise very masterly treatise on *South-Indian Palæography,* goes out of his way to add the following footnote:—

"Buddhamitra, a Buddhist of the Chola country and apparently a native of Malakuta or Malaikúttam, wrote in the eleventh century a *Tamil Grammar* in verse, with a commentary by himself, which he dedicated to the then Chola king and called after him *Vîrasôliyam.* The commentary cites a great number of Tamil works current in the eleventh century, and is therefore of much historical importance; for the approximate dates even of most Tamil works are hardly known. He cites *Amritasagaram, Avinayanar, Arurkovai, Eliviruttam, Kapilar, Kamban, Kaviviruttam, Kakkaipadiniyar, Katantras, Kandi, Kundalakesiviruttam, Kural, Sangai-authors, Chintamani, Solarajavarisai, Tandi, Tiruchchittambalakkovai, Tirumannivalaru, Tolkappiyam, Nambi, Nalavenba, Nariviruttam, Naladiyar, Niyayasudamani, Neminadam, Perundevar's Bharatam, Manippiravalam, Mayesuranar, Virasolanmerkavi.* This then represents the old Tamil literature prior to the eleventh century, and to it must be added the older Saiva works. The above-mentioned literature cannot be older than the eight century, for in the seventh century Hiuen Tsiang expressly states that the Tamil people were then indifferent to literature. That this literature arose under North-Indian influences and copied North-Indian models can hardly be disputed; but it is time now to assert," so runs the emphatic edict, "that it is nothing more than an exact copy; if there be any originality, it is in some of the similes and turns of expression only."†

---

* Dr. Hultzsch, too, seems to complain of this prevailing prejudice. "It is still a popular opinion," he writes in his preface to the first volume of *South-Indian Inscriptions,* "that a colloquial knowledge of one of the vernaculars with a slight smattering of Sanskrit is sufficient for editing successfully the records of bygone times."

† *Elements of the South-Indian Palæography,* p. 127, note 2.

But it is time also to see that such assertions do not go uncontradicted. It was but the other day that I found this passage cited in the *Encyclopœdia Britannica,**—a work supposed to contain nothing but reliable matter. But the passage in question is a veritable nest of errors. In the first place, to say that Buddhamitra is a native of Malakuta, while there is his own authority for saying that he belonged to a place called Ponpatti, argues either ignorance of the very opening verses of his *Grammar*, or an inclination to substitute the unknown for the known! For to this day, nobody knows where Malakuta is. It is, in fact, Dr. Burnell's own conjecture for the Chinease Mo-lo-kiu-ch'a; and its identification with the Tanjore district rests entirely upon an erroneous reading of his,—taking *Manukulachulamani-chaturvedimangalam* in an old Tanjore inscription for *Malakuta-chulamani-chaturvedi-mangalam.*† In the second place, to say that Buddhamitra wrote his *Grammar* in the eleventh century, may be permitted as a venturesome conjecture; but, before we accept it as an indication of a bit of *terra firma* on which to build historical conclusions, we must demand better proof than Dr. Burnell is able to offer. Here again, a mistaken identification is at the bottom of his argument. Vira-Chola to whom the *Grammar* is dedicated, is assumed to have been the same as Rajendra-Chola who "reigned from 1064 to 1113," and whose coronation "took place in 1079."‡ But neither Tamil literature nor the latest epigraphical researches lend the least support to this identification. Nay, there can be now very little doubt that Dr. Burnell simply mistook for a genuine Chola king the Chalukya prince Vira-Choda Vishnuvardhana IX., who ascended the throne in 1079.¶ In the third place,

---

* Article "Tamil" by R(ost). I find myself anticipated by this able writer in an investigation I have been of late conducting regarding the tense-formations of Tamil verbs.

† *Ante,* Vol. XVIII. p. 240. ‡ *South Indian Palœography,* p. 40.

¶ *South Indian Inscriptions* Vol. I. p. 32.

it is hard to account for Dr. Burnell's supposition that the commentry was by Buddhamitra himself. The old grammarian was really more modest! The commentry was written by one Perundevanar, and not by that author himself.

It is harder still to explain how Dr. Burnell got the curious list of books he gives. Mr. Damodaram Pillai—the veteran editor of the *Virasoliyam*—ought to be able to say, whether he found any such list in the many manuscript copies be examined in order to bring out his remarkably careful edition. But the list is its own best condemnation. It is full of enigmatic conundrums, sufficient to amaze and humble the proudest of Tamil Pandits! For, has he read *Eliviruttam* or *Nariviruttam?** He may know *Kundalakesi,* but does he know *Kundalakesiviruttam! Kaliviruttam,* as a metre, he may be familiar with, but has he read *Kaviviruttam* as a book? *Kandigai,* as a mode of exposition, he may know, but what is *Kandi?* He may condemn *manipravalam,* as a mongrel sort of poetic diction, and may even be aware that it is referred to in the commentary in question (for *here* we actually come upon something that has a basis in fact), but has he had the rare fortune of meeting with it as the title of a Tamil work? But he must feel considerable relief when he comes to *Tirumanni-valaru:* for, he must know that that is but the initial phrase of a particular stanza in the book under reference, and cannot be *itself* the title of a treatise. But to be serious, it is a pure waste of time to examine the list. The errors in it are too many and too transparent to mislead any one with the least pretence to Tamil scholarship. In this fanciful list, no doubt, some real names do occur; but even these shew only what hazy ideas the author had of their bearing. For instance, "*Sangai*-authors," if it has any

---

* [*Nariviruttam* actually occcurs as the name of a Tamil work in Pandit V. Saminadaiyar's edition of the *Jivakachintà*mani, Introduction, p. 2.—V. Venkayya.]

meaning at all, must mean the poets of the Madura college. It might be too bad to suppose that Dr. Burnell could mistake the Augustan age of Tamil literature itself for a practical book; but how else are we to avoid the charge of cross division, which enumerates, as of co-ordinate importance, the class and some individuals of that class? Further, is there any justification for saying that even these real authors & works are cited in the commentry? The most patient study does not reveal a word of reference to most of them. On the other hand, there is evidence in the book itself to shew that some of them did not exist to be cited. For instance, Buddhamitra alludes to the Sanskrit grammarian Dandin in a way that could leave but one impression—*viz.*, that the Tamil Tandi was yet to be born. With the exception of the *Kural, Naladiyar,* and a few other works, the bulk of the illustrations are the commentor's own composition, as the new principles of this Sanskritizing *Grammar* could not find apt support in the old Tamil literature.

Turning now to the conclusion drawn, does it look probable that such an extensive literature, as must be assumed to have existed from the list given, started into existence in the course of but three centuries of those backward times? Even supposing there existed no works but those cited in the commentry (which is really difficult to believe), and omitting also the "older Saiva" works, which are allowed to have existed, though not cited by Buddhamitra, Dr. Burnell's list would give us ten important works for a century, that is, one standard work, worthy of being cited in a grammar, for every ten years; and yet, the Tamilar were all but recently indifferent to letters! But the truth is, Dr. Burnell is simply indulging his fancy, and piling up conjecture upon conjecture to construct his cloudland. Hiuen Tsiang says not a word about the Tamilar. He simply notes what somebody told him of the people of Mo-lo-kiu-cha. But to the anxious ears

of Dr. Burnell, Mo-lo-kiu-cha sounds like Malakuta, and to his no less anxious eyes, the innocent word Manukula in the old Tanjore inscription, though written in characters "of two to three inches in height," appears as Malakuta; and forthwith, he hurries to apply what is said of the people of Mo-lo-kiu-cha, not merely to the village of Manukulachulamani-chaturvedimangalam, nor even to the delta of the Kaveri where that village is supposed to have been situated, but to the whole Tamil race itself! Untrustworthy as such sweeping assertions about whole nations generally are, the hearsay report of the Chinese pilgrim would appear to be extremely so, when taken along with another choice bit of news, his worthy but unnamed informant seems to have favoured him with. The capital of Mo-lo-kiu-cha, Hiuen Tsiang was told, was three thousand *li* from Kanchi; and General Cunningham wishing to discover the place, finds himself quite at sea, having to go far out into the ocean beyond Cape Comorin to cover the distance given! Yet with Dr. Burnell, the hearsay evidence of Hiuen Tsiang about the literary tastes of the people of that curious missing city and country, is sufficient evidence, to declare that the Tamil people had no literature till the eighth century A. D.! It cannot be untrue that some angels, in their flights, do extend their wings too far forwards to be good for their vision! With all my admiration, I can find no other explanation for the state of mind that could indulge in such gratuitous and unprofitable dogmatism. Possibly the indifference noted is also not to letters in general, but only to Buddhistic canons, in search of which the pious Chinese traveller came to India. * Lastly, as regards Dr. Burnell's emphatic assertion about Tamil literature being but an exact copy of Sanskrit works, it need not concern us much, seeing what proofs the author gives in the same paragraph of his scholarship in that literature. Even one that has studied no

* This is the view adopted in my first article on "*The Ten Tamil Idyls.*"

other Tamil classics than the popular *Kural*, may **know, if** pressed, what answer to give to this charge. I am sorry, only for the reputation of Dr. Burnell, that this unlucky note of his, as unlucky as uncalled for, has found its way into the stately columns of the *Encyclopædia Britannica.*

Be it far from me to disparage the labours of the few European scholars, to whose indefatigable endeavours alone is due whatever light there exists in this and similar branches of study. The blame, if anywhere, must rest with the native scholars themselves. If they fail to imbibe the historical spirit of modern times, and do not stir themselves to help forward the researches made regarding their own antiquities, they will have themselves to thank, if their favourite language and literature are condemned and thrown overboard, as is summarily done by Dr. Burnell.

Returning to our subject, I am aware of only two serious attempts to determine the age **of Kun Pandya**, or which is the same thing, the age of Sambandha. The first is that of Dr. Caldwell* in his *Comparative Dravidian Grammar,* Introduction, pages 137-143, and Appendix III. pages 535-540, and the second is that of Mr. Nelson in his *District Manual* called the '*Madura Country*,' Part III. Chapter II. pages 54-70. Neither of these two attempts appears to me successful or satisfactory. It would take too much space to review their arguments in detail, but I shall briefly note what strikes me as the leading features of these theories.

Dr. Caldwell's hypothesis as to the age of Sambandha is based entirely upon two assumptions—first, that Kun Pandya's name was **Sundara Pandya**, and second, that Sundara Pandya

---

* The loss to the Tamil language and literature by the death of this venerable Tamil scholar is really great, and it may be long before that language finds so devoted a student and so patient an enquirer as The Right Rev. Bishop Caldwell.

is identical with the **Sender Bendi** of Marco Polo that reigned in 1292. As Mr. Nelson also proceeds upon the first of these two suppositions, it is necessary to observe once for all that Sundara-Pandya is hardly a proper name. The deity at Madura is called Sundara, and Sundara-Pandya by itself is no more the name of any particular Pandya than is Sri-Padmanabhadasa the individual appellation of any sovereign of Travancore. Hence we find the term Sundara associated with the name of so many kings of Madura. That it never stood by itself as the distinctive name of any individual Pandya, it may be hazardous to assert, but that it was too common a designation to yield us any historical clue, requires no proof. Still, for the satisfaction of European scholars, I shall quote just one or two authorites. Dr. Hultzsch says with reference to the phrase 'crown of Sundara': "The name Sundara occurs in the traditional lists of Pandya kings. In the present inscription the term 'crown of Sundara seems to be used in the sense of "the crown of the Pandya king."* So Sundara means nothing but Pandya. Be it also noted that this expression, 'Sundara's crown,' occurs in an inscription of Rajendra-Chola, who, according to Dr. Hultzsch, ascended the throne about 1014 A. D., that is 278 years before Marco Polo landed at Kayal.

It is possible also to trace the source of this common error that confounds Kun Pandya with Sundara-Pandya. When Kun Pandya was converted by Sambandha, the Saivas in their exultation called him **ninra-sir-Nedumaran,**—the tall or prosperous Pandya of established beauty or grace;—probably meaning thereby nothing more than a compliment, like the title 'Defender of the Faith,' conferred by the Pope on Henry VIII. I am not sure, whether the name Kun Pandya itself was not an after designation, to be understood metaphorically

---

* *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. I. p. 96.

and theologically, rather than literally and physically. Anyhow, the Kun Pandya of Sambandha still continues to be worshipped as a canonized saint, only under the name of Ninra-sîr-Nedumara-nayanar. When, however, the time came for the Sanskrit *Sthala-Purana* to be written, the Pandits, who must needs translate even proper names, rendered Kun Pandya into Kubja-Pandya and Ninra-sîr-Nedumaran into Sundara-Pandya, exactly as they translated his queen's name, Mangaiyarkkarasi, into Vanitesvari, and his minister's name Kulachchirai into Kulabandhana. The *Purana* itself makes it clear that Sundara-Pandya was simply a title assumed after the conversion;* and the Tamilas know of no other title then assumed, but the name of Ninra-sîr-Nedumaran. Be the explanation what it may, to build any theory upon the name Sundara-Pandya, is simply to build upon quicksand. I shall add but one more testimony to this simple fact. The Rev. E. Lœventhal says: "The name Sundara-Pandya is found on such a multitude of coins, both in the Tinnevelly and Madura districts, that it is difficult to believe that all those coins should have been struck by one king. Could it not be that some of his successors had used that name as a title on their coins, the meaning of the name being only 'beautiful.'" ‡ Of course, such perplexities are unavoidable, when one proceeds upon a wrong hypothesis. For, it should be added, Mr. Lœventhal goes upon Dr. Caldwell's theory that there was a particular Pandya, called Sundara-Pandya, who reigned in 1292. Error in these regions of pure speculation is always infectious.

Now with regard to Marco Polo's **Sender Bendi**; Marco Polo distinctly says, he ruled over Soli, 'the best and noblest province of India.' Madura does not answer this description,

---

* *Tiruvilaiyádal-Puránam*, Chapter 69, verse 68 and *Tirunelvèli Sthala-Purànam*, p. 748, verses 4 and 5.

‡ *The Coins of Tinnevelly*, p. 19.

nor can we conceive how it can possibly be corrupted, even in the language of these flying foreign visitors into 'Soli'. Colonel Yule may be right in indentifying Soli with Tanjore, the then capital of the Chola country: but it looks more probable that it was the name of some province about the sea-coast yet to be identified. At any rate, it cannot be Madura. That in some undated § inscriptions in the possession of Dr. Caldwell, the expression 'Sundara-Chola-Pandya' occurs will be scarcely accepted as an argument for confounding Soli with Madura, unless we have a foregone conclusion to maintain. More reasonable appears to be the conclusion arrived at by Colonel Yule, that Marco Polo's Sender Bendi was no sovereign of Madura, but some adventurer "who had got possession of the coast country and perhaps paid some nominal homage to Madura." † It is unnecessary for our purpose to follow Dr. Caldwell through the maze of dreamy tales he cites from two Muhammadan historians, to shew that there was a king in Madura about 1292, called **'Sundar Bandi.'** The earlier of the two, Rashidu'ddin, says that a Sundar Bandi ruled over Malabar, extending from Kulam to Silawar (which Dr. Caldwell interprets as Nellore !), with a Muhammadan minister named Shekh Jamalu'ddin, and that he died in 1293, leaving his throne and seven hundred bullock loads of jewels to his lucky minister ! Wassaf, the second historian, agrees as to Sundar Bandi's death in 1293, but amplifies the seven hundred bullock loads into seven thousand, and gives the treasure to a brother of Sundar Bandi, instead of to his Muhammadan minister. But not so harmless is his other exaggeration about the extent of Malabar, which is here described as stretching from the Persian sea to Silawar (or Nellore),—which, indeed, would be a noble province to rule

§ I have now with me some inscriptions with this name which I should have published already, but for want of time and health to make out their full bearing.

† Colonel Yule quoted by Dr. Caldwell ; see Appendix III. p. 587.

over, but neither Malabar, Madura nor Soli! Still more remarkable is another statement of this historical authority depended upon by Dr. Caldwell. The Sundar Bandi who dies in 1293, re-appears in 1310, and flees from Madura to Delhi for protection against a rebellious brother of his! But it is needless for our purpose to go into the evidence of these so-called historians, cited by Dr. Caldwell to support his view. Let us suppose that the reconciliations he proposes, between these and other queer statements of theirs, are satisfactory, and also that the indentification of Marco Polo's Sender Bendi of Soli with their Sundar Bandi of Malabar is as sound as the learned Doctor could wish; still, are we any way nearer our conclusion? A distinctly different identification would yet remain to be made. Is the Kûn Pândya of Sambandha the same as the Sundar Bandi of the two Muhammadan historians? There is not the least shadow of evidence in favour of the supposition, while every historical fact known is decidedly against it. We need mention here but two. (1) The minister of Kûn Pândya was not the Muhammadan Shêkh Jamalu'ddîn, but Kulachchirai Nayanar—one of the sixty-three canonized Saiva saints.* (2) The dominions of Kûn Pandya, instead of extending from Kûlam or the Persian Gulf to Nellore, did not go beyond Trichinopoly, where the three Tamil kingdoms met in the days of Sambandha.§ The Chôla kingdom itself did not embrace Cuddalore, which was then a Pallava province.‡

Now turning to **Mr. Nelson,**—surely his procedure is more judicious. He has no decided theory to uphold, but

---

* We have Sambandha's own evidence for this fact. For instance, he says "*Korravan tanakku mandiriy=aya Kulachchirai;*" Ramaswami Pillai's edition, p. 828.

§ See Sambandha's *Mukkichchara-padigam*, p. 344.

‡ See *Tiru-navukkarasar Puranam*, verse 84. Tiruppadirippuliyur, now called Old Cuddalore, was the capital of a Pallava province and the seat of a Buddhist university; hence its name, which is simply a Tamil rendering of Pataliputra.

arguing from certain premises, he concludes that "it is very *possible* that Kûn Pandya reigned in the latter half of the eleventh century." The premises assumed are, (1) that certain conquests and feats, claimed for one Sundara-Pandya in an undated inscription, are true and applicable to Kûn Pandya; and (2) that Mangaiyarkkarasi, the queen of Kûn Pandya, was the daughter of Karikala Chola, who persecuted Ramanuja. Now both these premises appear to me more than questionable: and I shall consider them separately.

The most remarkable point in Mr. Nelson's inscription is the alleged occurrence in it of the name of **Mangaiyarkkarasi, the patroness of Sambandha.** But, as Mr. Venkayya informs me, the name of Mangaiyarkkarasi is a mere misreading of Mr. Nelson for *Ulagamulududaiyal*,* the Tamil equivalent of Lôkamahadêvî.* This removes the only ground for any plausible identification of Sundara-Pandya with the Kun Pandya we are in search of.

The only other historical allusion in the document is the burning of Tanjore and Uraiyûr. Much is made of this by Mr. Nelson. But it is altogether fatal to his theory. Kûn Pândya could not have burned Tanjore, for the simple reason that Tanjore did not then exist. Neither Sambandha, nor Appar, nor Sundara found such a place in their systematic and incessant peregrinations. They do not even seem to have heard of such a place, which would be certainly inexplicable, seeing that all of them, and particularly the third, spent so much of their time in what is now called the Tanjore district, where scarcely a village§ was left uncommemorated in their endless hymns. Sundara, indeed, mentions a Tanjore, as the birthplace of a particular saint, but it is not our

* See Dr. Burgess and Mr. Natesa Sastri's *Tamil and Sanskrit Inscriptions*, p. 51, note 2.

§ Over five hundred and twenty-five such villages are mentioned in the *Devara Hymns*, nearly half of which are in the Tanjore district.

Tanjore at all, but a village now called Pottai Tañjâvûr, a hamlet near Negapatam. By the time of Karuvûr Dêvar, one of the nine authors of the *Tiru Isaippâ*, Tanjore makes its appearance with its temple of Râjarâjêsvara,* and in that supplement to the *Dêvâram*, a hymn is found for the first time for Tanjore. Nambi Andar Nambi thus finds it necessary to qualify the original Tanjore of Sundara with a distinguishing epithet, 'Maruga-nattu Tañjai.'† Though negative in itself, this is as clear evidence as it is possible to obtain about the origin of a town from literary records.

Now for **Mangaiyarkkarasi being the daughter of Karikala,** which is Mr. Nelson's second assumption, it rests entirely upon a statement of Dr. Wilson, that she is called so in an account of the *gôpura* of the Buddhist temple 'Pudcovaily,'—a place I am not able to identify with any known Tamil town. We cannot estimate the historical value of this account unless more particulars are given. But so far as the question in hand is concerned, the account, whatever it may turn out to be, cannot prove of much consequence. There is but one Karikala known to Tamil literature,— the hero of so many immortal poems of classical antiquity. There may have been several others of a later generation who passed under that honoured name: but there was apparently none about the time of Sambandha, who would have surely commemorated the father of his royal patroness, if he had had any independent importance. In one of the *Dêvara Hymns*,‡ the word Karikala actually occurs, but it means there 'the god of death' and not a Chola prince. But even supposing that Karikala was the name of the father of Mangaiyarkkarasi, we should shew that that Karikala was

---

* It was built by the Chola king Rajaraja about A. D. 1000; see *South-Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. II. p. 1.

† See the *Tiruvandadi*, verse 66. Sekkilar does the same; see *Seruttunai-nayanar Puranam*, verse 1.

‡ Ramasvami Pillai's edition, p. 983.

the real persecutor of Ramanuja, before we can draw any inference with reference to the question in hand.

I find in Dr. Caldwell's arguments too, a reference to Ramanuja,* and I am afraid, it indicates too serious a distortion in the view taken of the religious history of Southern India to be passed over in silence. We cannot here go into the question in detail, and must be content with pointing out certain well-marked stages in the religious development of the Tamil nation. There was a period, lost altogether in hoary antiquity, when the native Dravidian religion, with its peculiar forms of sacrifices, prophecies and ecstatic dances, dimly visibles till in *veriyattu*, *velanadal*, and other ceremonies of mountain races, was alone in vogue. The first foreign influence brought to bear upon the primitive form of worship was that of the Vedic religion, which, with its usual spirit of toleration and compromise, adopted and modified the practices it then found current in the country. For a long time the influence was anything but strong: but it accumulated as time elapsed, and some traces of this foreign influence may be observed in such fragments of the *pre-Tolkappiyam* works as now and then turn up in old commentaries. By the time this famous grammar came to be written, the Dravidians would appear to have adopted a few of the social institutions, myths, and ceremonies of the Aryan settlers. But it was even then only an adaptation, and no copy. The most ancient of the works of the Madura College were composed during this period. Next came the Buddhist movement; and after a long period of mutual toleration and respect, during which was produced the bulk of the extant Tamil classics, the creed of Gautama supplanted the older compound of Dravidian and Vêdic worship. After attaining to power, the mild doctrines of Buddha seem to have undergone rapid degeneration and to have otherwise offended the followers of

---

* See *Comparative Dravidian Grammar*, Introduction, p. 140.

the original cult. Then followed the revival of Hinduism. In the course of its long contact with Buddhism, the old Dravidio-Aryan religion was considerably modified in principles and practice, and the Hinduism that was now revived, was altogether therefore a higher and more complex compound. The first who raised their voices against Buddha, were those who worshipped Siva, a name that the Tamilas had learnt to use for the deity, ever since they came under the Aryan influence, if not earlier, as contended by Dr. Oppert. The question was then, not between Siva and Vishnu, for no such antagonism was then conceivable, but between the Vedic ceremonies and the teachings of Buddha. The struggle must have continued for a long while, but the time was ripe when Sambandha appeared. Already had Appar,—a learned and earnest Buddhist monk in the most famous of the southern cloisters,*—renounced publicly his faith in Gautama; and in a generation or two appeared Sundara. These three had to fight very hard, but they succeeded neverthless in turning back the tide of Buddhism; and though the schismatics lingered long in the land, they never regained their lost position. Thus was inaugurated the period of piety and miracles, which, no doubt, impeded for a while the cause of sound learning and culture. It was during this period that the country came to be studded all over with those temples, which to this day form the characteristic feature of the Tamil provinces. As this process was going on, there appeared the Alvars to add to the general excitment and to accelerate the decline of Buddhism. Though they represented the community that loved to feature the deity in the form of Vishnu, I do not think they ever set themselves in direct opposition to the Saivas, as their later adherents do.‡ The

* I mean Tiruppadirippuliyur, named after Pataliputra.

‡ The fable of Tirumangai Alvar's quarrel with Sambandha, whose trident he is said to have snatched, reflects only the modern feelings of the sect. Even as a story it fails; Sambandha had only a pair of cymbals, and never a trident.

common enemy, the enemy of the *Vedas*, was still in the field. It was while these sects of Hindus were thus re-establishing themselves in practice, that the Acharyas, *i.e.* the theological doctors, rose to supply the theory. Even to the earliest of them, Sankaracharya, was left only the work of formally and theoretically completing the religious revolution that was already fast becoming, in practice, an accomplished fact, at least in Southern India.† He is usually said to have established, by his *Bhashyas* or philosophic interpretations of Vedic texts, the six orthodox systems of worship, Saiva and Vaishnava forms inclusive. This assertion ought to be carefully interpreted; for there can be no greater mistake than to suppose that he invented, or originated, these Six systems. Forms of religion are founded, not by philosophers and theologians, with their interpretations and argumentations, but by heroic men of faith—faith in God and faith in themselves, to such an extent that they can induce not only others but themselves, too, to believe in the miracles they perform. The former come later on, to justify and sanction what already exists, with their elaborate exegetics, written solely for the learned and thoughtful—not to say the sceptical. Sankaracharya himself is personally a Saiva, but he supresses his individual inclinations, and takes his stand upon the common ground of the *Vedas*, and so supports all sects accepting the authority of those hoary compilations, in order to shew a united front against the common foe. It is expressly to meet the heresy of *Nirvana* that he formulates the *Advaita* or non-dualistic theory. But the common enemy soon disappears, or at least sinks into unimportance; and later Acharyas, not feeling that external pressure, find the Non-Dualism of Sankara a little too high-pitched, if not dangerous ot also the current pietist

---

† Even in Northern India, the practical work of confuting and overthrowing the Buddhists fell to the lot of Bhatta Kumara,—the redoubtable champion of Vedic *karman*,—and of Prabhakara rather than of Samkara, who followed them after several generations.

forms of worship. Accordingly, Ramanuja slightly modifies the original Non-Dualism, and distinctly puts a Vaishnava interpretation on the Vedic texts. But he still retains the Non-Dualism of Sankara to some extent. His system is not Dualism, but *Visishtadvaita*, meaning *qualified* Non-dualism. When we come, however, to the days of Madhvacharya, the Buddhistic theory is so far forgotten that all forms of that original Non-Dualism, with which alone Sankaracharya was able to confront the heretical Nihilism, are completely rejected in favour of pronounced Dualism, which perhaps was always the theory implied in the Saiva and Vaishnava practices. And what is more, this last of the Acharyas adopts some of the very principles for the sake of which Buddha revolted against the *Vedas*—as for instance, substituting animal images made of flour for the veritable and living ones required for Vedic sacrifices. But except in the matter of such minor details, the dogmas of none of these Acharyas affected the forms of public worship. The temples and the processions remained, exactly as they were in the days of the fiery votary of old—the Saiva Nayanmars and the Vaishnava Alvars; only, as time rolled on, these latter crept, one by one, into the sanctuaries they themselves worshipped and secured those divine honours that are now their undisputed rights. With the last of the Acharyas* we reach fairly into the Muhammadan times: and the arrest that all native activities in religion, literature, and other walks of intellectual life then experienced, is a matter of history, and not of speculation.

From this short account, **it should be clear in what period we ought to look for Sambandha.** The confused talk about Ramanujacharya and Kun Pandya, which we find in both

---

* There can be no dispute as to the age of Madhvacharya. He died in Saka 1120, the Pingala year, or 1197-98 A.D. [Compare Dr. Bhandarkar's *Report on Sanskrit Manuscripts* for 1882-83, p. 203.] Satyaviratirtha, who died in 1879, was the thirty-fifth from him in succession.

Mr. Nelson and Dr. Caldwell, betrays such an absence of the sense of historical perspective as cannot but produce the most amusing and most grotesque results. For instance, it is now pretty well established that the independence of the Tamil countries was completely lost by the early years of the fourteenth century. It was about the year 1324 A.D. that the notorious and cruelhearted chieftain, **Malik Naib Kafur** of Ferishta, popularly known in Tamil as the **Adi-Sultan Malik Nemi,** took possession of Madura, razed to the ground the outer walls of the town with their fourteen towers, and demolished the temple and despoiled it of its valuables, leaving behind nothing but the shrines of Sundaresvara and Minakshi. The Muslim clouds must have been hanging over the Tamil kingdoms a good many years before they at last broke and overwhelmed the southernmost of them. Whether or no the Muhammadans actually subverted the Pandya kingdom about 1100, as Mr. Nelson* is inclined to think, the Pandya kingdom could have enjoyed little peace during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Yet it is at the very end of the thirteenth century, that Dr. Caldwell would place Sambandha and therefore the beginning of that grand struggle between the Buddhists and the Saivas that finally led to the disappearance of the former. That Kun Pandya, the most powerful monarch of his age, was a Buddhist, is as certain as that he really existed. That Buddhism was the prevailing religion, though on the point of decline, is evident from every hymn of Sambandha and of his elder contemporary, Appar, who incessantly complains of the persecutions he experienced, at the hands of the heretics, in his native district of Cuddalore. Such was the position of affairs in the reign of Kun Pandya: and yet Dr. Caldwell would have us believe that Kun Pandya ruled in 1292, because Marco Polo happens to talk of a 'Sender Bendi of Soli', in that year of grace!

---

* *Madura Country*, Part III, Chapter III, p. 76.

And the consequence is that we have also to believe that, by some miracle or other, the whole scene had completely changed by 1324, when Malik captured Madura. In other words, within the short space of thirty-two years, the Buddhistic religion with its widespreading organisation, half a dozen holy orders and thousands of monks in each, all disappeared as if by magic, and the ready-made Saiva religion stepped into its place, with its richly endowed temples with golden images, and outer walls having fourteen towers! If such a theory does not violate all the analogies of history, I wonder what can! To add to the miracle, it was during the subsequent centuries of foreign oppression, of Muhammadan generals and of Nayaka and Telugu viceroys, that the bulk of our existing literature arose!

Unless, therefore, no better hypothesis can be found,—better founded on facts, more natural and consistent in its consequences, and better confirmed by collateral evidence,—we can not but decline, with all our defence to the esteemed authors concerned, to accept either of the theories as answering to truth.

The truth is, such theories are the fruits of pure despair,—are advanced, as the drowning man clutches the straw. Literary Tamil is a difficult dialect to master, and the literature in it is too extensive and complicated to be compassed without years of patient study and prolonged attention. The conviction, too, is abroad that these literary records are utterly devoid of historical implications. "We have not," says Dr. Caldwell, "a single reliable date to guide us, and in the midst of conjecture, a few centuries more or less seem to go for nothing. Tamil writers, like Hindu writers in general, hide their individuality in the shade of their writings. Even the names of most of them are unknown. They seem to have regarded individual celebrity, like individual existence, as worthless, and absorption into the universal spirit of the

classical literature of their country as the highest good to which their compositions could aspire. Their readers followed in their course, age after age. If a book was good, people admired it; but whether it was written by a man, or by a divinity, or whether it wrote itself as the *Vedas* were commonly supposed to have done, they neither knew nor cared. Still less did they care, of course, if the books were bad. The historical spirit and antiquarian spirit, to a great degree even the critical spirit, are developments of modern times. If, therefore, I attempt to throw some light on age of the principal Tamil works, I hope, it may be borne in mind that, in my opinion, almost the only thing that is perfectly certain in relation to those works, is that they exist."* Under such circumstances, it is no wonder, that for historical purposes, the literary works are treated as if they were as good as non-existent. If the authors systematically hide even their own individualities, what light are they likely to throw on the history of their times? That the vast majority of modern Tamil writers,—the stereotyped *purána*-makers and the authors of cut and dry *Kalambagams* and *Andádis*,—are guilty of this curious kind of literary suicide, can never be gainsaid. But I would beg to submit at the same time, in extenuation of their crime, that writers of this class can never possess any individuality either to be preserved or submerged. They are poets only in name,—with a ready made *Book of Similes* † and other equipments to suit; they dispense with nature and her promptings, as they wriggle themselves up, from rhyme to rhyme, and alliteration to alliteration. But putting aside these products of stagnation and ascending to the fountains of Tamil literature, we meet with well marked individualities both in the authors and in the characters

---

* *Comparative Dravidian Grammar*, Introduction, p. 128.

† This is a curious book attributed to Pugalêndi. There are hosts of other treatises telling us with what letters, words, etc., we should begin a verse and what dreadful consequences will follow otherwise, and so forth.

they create, and can observe no great inclination on their part to obliterate their personalities. On the other hand, their individuality may be found sometimes even obtruded upon us. For instance, every hymn of Sambandha uniformly closes with a benedictory verse, where his own name, his native place, and other particulars are given. Only, in keeping with the general Indian failing as to chronology, the old poets, as well as the new, give us no dates. They nevertheless specify the names of their patrons, sovereigns, friends, and so forth, as occasion offers itself, and otherwise furnish us with much historical information, which is waiting only to be gathered up and collated, to yield the most reliable data for reconstructing extinct societies and social conditions,* I can not, therefore, make up my mind to believe that the old and true Tamil literature is as barren of historical import as is generally assumed.

To see what light the works of Sambandha and his colleagues throw upon the historical conditions of their age, is too large a topic to be taken up in this connection. But confining ourselves to the more important question of the age of Sambandha, the question we have already propounded for our consideration, we may examine the literary works connected with the subject, to see whether they cannot furnish us more reliable indications than Marco Polo's 'Sender Bendi of Soli'! The sacred Saiva works may not, perhaps, enable us to discover when Sambandha did actually live; but they are certain to shew at least when he could not have lived; and considering the confusion that reigns in connection with the subject, even so much of light cannot but be welcome.

---

* It is upon this conviction that the *Ten Tamil Idyls* have been taken up elsewhere for analysis.

I shall now try to **trace the influence of Sambandha, from the middle ages backwards to the earlier times** confining myself to such leading facts as might be inferred from the sacred Saiva works themselves.

Let us begin with the last of the canonizd Saiva saints, **Umapati Sivacharya.** Umapàti Sivàchàrya is th fourth of the Santana-Acharyas and is the author of the eight of the fourteen *Siddhánta Sástras*, besides six minor works devoted to sacred history and geography. Of these latter, one is on the life of Sèkkilâr, the author of the *Tiruttondar-* or *Periya-puránam*, another on that *Puràna* itself, while a third gives an account of the eleven sacred Saiva books, as compiled by Nambi Andâr Nambi. From all these three, I have borrowed valuable facts in the earlier parts of this inquiry. Evidently the author had a historical and critical spirit, and all his philosophical disquisitions bear ample testimony to this.* But the fact I would here mention in evidence thereof, is one that is directly connected with the question in hand — a fact for which Dravidian archæology can never be sufficiently grateful. In his preface to the *Sankalpa-nirákarana*,—a subtle and able metaphysical dissertation,—he tells us the object for which the lecture was written, the audience to which it was addressed, and the date on which it was delivered. This date was the 6th day of the Ani festival in the Chidambaram temple,† in **the Saka year 1235.** Here then is a date which may prove a veritable loadstar to guide us through the conjectural cloudland of current chronology. It is not a date prefixed by some unknown hand, as in Kamban's *Ràmàyana* or in the *Skànda-Puràna*, and therefore open to question. It

---

* No difficult philosophical doctrine of his need be quoted to illustrate the liberal critical spirit of this writer. It is enough to point to his preface to the *Sivaprakâsa.*

† Umâpati Sivâcharya was one of the 3,000 Brâhman priests attached to this temple.

occurs, on the other hand, just in the middle (lines 26-29) * of a long sentence, extending over 54 lines of Agaval metre, in which the author speaks in the first person and introduces his treatise, which immediately follows without any further ceremony or word of explanation.

If the *Sànkalpaniràkarana* was written in Saka 1235 or A. D. 1313, Umapati Sivachrya must have composed his account of the *Periyapuràṇam* much about the same time. Can we seriously then seek for Sambandha in 1292? The *Puràna* that narrates his miracles was old enough about 1313 to need an account of its origin being written.

That *Puràna* itself must have been in 1313 at least a century old. For, Umapati Sivacharya does not write as if he were a Boswell writing the life of a Johnson. No one can read his account of the way in the *Periyapuràṇam* came to be written, without being convinced that there was a respectable interval of time between that *Puràna* and his account of it.† To Umâpati, the author of the *Puràna* was already a canonized saint, worthy of worship along with those commemorated in the *Puràna* itself. The work had become by his time so sacred that the first line of it is ascribed to the direct inspiration of the god at Chidambaram, who is further made to announce the completion of the holy treatise to king Anapaya by *asarìri* or 'incorporeal voice.' No doubt, myths do grow rapidly in the tropical East; but can we seriously think

---

* The lines run thus:— "êlanj=sirunûrr=eduttav=âyiram vâlunar=chakana=maruvânirpa, etc." Mr. Damodaram Pillai says in his preface to to the *Vîrasôliyam* that our author composed his *Kôyil-Purânam* about Saka 1,200; but he does not state his authority. *The Tamil Plutarch* begins its account of Umapati Sivacharya dogmatically thus:— "This celebrated poet and philosopher flourished in the 17th century;" but ends with nescience and doubt. "The time of his existence is not known; but we find his name mentioned in the Introduction to the *Sidambara-Purânam*, which dates A.D. 1513." It is hard to conceive how the author can make the two ends meet of this, his small paragraph of twenty-three lines!

† See particularly verses 9 and 10.

of ascribing those under notice to the imagination of Umâpati himself, the leading characteristic of whose intellect was, as far as we can judge of it from his writtings, a spirit of matter-of-fact, almost prosaic realism. The myths must have been current, not only in his own age, but for some generations preceeding, to have grown to some extent venerable. We are led to the same conclusion by another well known fact, *viz.*, that three Santâna-Achâryas followed Sêkkilâr, the author of the *Puràna*, before Umâpati, the fourth in the list, appeared. I say therefore, at the very least a century must have elapsed between the composition of the *Periyapuràṅam* and the account of it, written as we have just seen in 1313. In all probability, the interval was longer. The work is unquestionably the oldest of the existing Tamil *Puràṅas*. Frequent references to incidents narrated in it will be found in almost every other *Puràna*, including the *Skànda* itself. * It was composed, we are told, † with the express object of superseding the Buddhistic epic *Chintâmani*, which was evidently the only narrative poem of any magnitude then in existence. The Chôla prince at whose instance Sêkkilâr wrote his *Periya-purânam*, is well known in Tamil literature under the name of Anapâya Chôla Pallava. He is sometimes called also Tirunîrru Chôla, ‡ probably to indicate the regard he had for that symbol of the Saiva faith. His religious fervour seems to have proved largely beneficial to the temple of Chidambaram, which he is said to have covered with gold §— probably in the way of repair of what was done by his fore-father Parântaka I. Though it would appear from the

---

* See for instance *Avaipugu-Padalam*, verse 52.

† See Umapati Sivacharya's *Account of the Periyapurânam*, verse 10.

‡ *Kôyil-Purânam*, Payiram, verse 12. Tiruniru means the 'holy ashes I am glad to find that in the preface to the *Purâna*, its editor, the late Mr. Arumuga Navalar, the greatest of modern Tamil Pandits, notes the date we have assigned above to Umapati Sivacharya.

§ *Kôyil-Purânam*, Payiram, verse 12, and *Periyapurânam* Payiram, verse 8.

Tiruttondar- or *Periya-purànam* that Anapâya was holding his court at Tiruvârûr, * near Negapatam, when that *Purânam* was composed, a verse † cited in the commentary on the Tamil *Tandi Alaṁkära* leaves no room for doubt that his real capital was the same Gangapuram or Gangaikondasolapuram, where the successors of Parantaka bore rule. Probably he was attracted to the former city by religious considerations. In an inscription of his, at Tiruvarur, dated in the seventh year of his reign, offering gifts of "land, gold, brass, silver and other excellent treasures" to the images of Sambandha and the other two authors of the *Dëvära Hymns*, set up in that shrine, he calls himself Rajakesarivarman *alias* Tribhuvanachakravartin Sri-Kulottunga-Choladeva. ‡ Referring to this inscription, Dr. Hultzsch writes: "The characters of the Tiruvarur inscription of this prince are decidedly more modern than those of the Tanjavur inscriptions of Rajaraja and Rajendra-Chola. Accordingly, the *Periyapuranam* must have been composed after their time. On the other hand, the subjoined inscription proves that the legends which Sèkkilàr embodied in his work were not of his own invention, but must have grown up in the time of the predecessors of Rajèndra-Chôla." † Of course, for this last conclusion we stand in no need of any proof. In the very opening chapter, Sèkkilar himself expressly states how the lives of the sixtythree saints he embodies in his work where commemorated in the hymns

* *Periyapurânam, Tiruvârûr-sirappu,* verse 12.

"... *Anapayan-koy-polil-sûl-Gangapura-maligai* ...." sûtra 95, part 14. According to Mr. Kanakasabhai Pillai, Gangapuram was the capital of the Chôla empire under Abhaya also (see *ante,* Vol. XIX, p. 337). But the *Kalingattu Parani,* canto xiii, verse 92, depended upon for this statement, is, at best, ambiguous. Gangapuri there appears more as a conquered place than as the capital,—so favouring Dr. Fleet's statement (*ante,* Vol. XX, p. 277) that Abhaya succeeded to the Chôla throne not wholly as the lawful heir to it. Probably after capturing this old Chôla capital and with it the Chôla crown, Abhaya held his imperial court in the more central station Kanchi.

‡ *South-Indian Inscriptions,* Vol. II, p. 153 f.

† *Ibid.* p. 167.

of Sundara, and how they were subsequently amplified by Nambi Andar Nambi.*

But the inscription alluded to by Dr. Hulzch is certainly a remarkable one. It records the setting up of a copper image with the rather telling legend '*Tattâ Namarê kân,*' or O Tattan! He is one of us! Behold!' The reference is to the dying words of Meypporul Nayanar, imploring his attendant, Tattan by name, to spare the life of his murderer out of veneration for the form of a Siva devotee the assassin had assumed. The date of the inscription is the third year of Rajèndra-Chôla's reign; and there can be no question that this Rajendra was the immediate successor of the now well-known Chôla emperor Ràjaraja, since the person who sets up the image is the temple-manager Poygai-nadu Kilavan Adittan Sûryan *alias* Tennavan Mûvêndavèlan, figuring so frequently in the published inscription† of that great monarch. It is not unlikely that the shrewd temple-manager found his new youthful sovereign anxious to exercise a rather inconveniently strict supervision over the management of temple endowments so profusely made by his predecessor on the throne, and in consequence, wanted to read to him a practical sermon by thus setting up the image of a king, who held it profane even to touch the hair of his own assassin, because he had come covered in Saiva garments! However that be, the question of absorbing interest to us here is, whence did our clever manager borrow his text to be thus utilized for his purpose? Is it or is it not from the *Periyapurânam?* If it is, it must unquestionably establish the priority of that treatise to the third year of Rajendra's reign. The words of the legend appear temptingly similar to those in the *Purâna.* Dr. Hultzsch himself observes, "The words '*Tattâ namarê kân*' bear a

---

* *Tirumalai-sirappu,* verses 38 and 39.

† See *South-Indian Inscriptions,* Vol. II, Parts I and II.

close resemblance to those of the verse '*namar Tattâ.*'" The resemblance, however, is really closer. The line in the *Periya-puranam* reads not '*namar Tattâ,*' but '*Tatta namar*' exactly in the order given in the insctiptton. Probably the mistake arose by referring to the *Tiruttonder-Puranasaram,** or the abstract of the *Periapuranm* by Umapati, instead of to the *Purna* itself. In the face of the identity, I am not sure that Dr. Hultzsch's inference about the relative age of Sekkilar and Rajaraja will be accepted by all as conclusive. For, it is possible to contend, in the first place, whether there lived but one Anapaya, as the argument assumes, and in the next place, whether South-Indian palæography is yet in a position to be dogmatic about dates, independent of corroborative evidence *aliunde.* Nevertheless I am not inclined to contest the point, partly out of deference to the opinion of so careful a writer as Dr. Hultzsch, but more because I think I have a better hypothesis as to the source of the Tanjore temple-manager's text, than ascribing it to the *Periya-puranam.*

For I find in the *Andâdi* of **Nambi Andar Nambi,** upon which the *Periyapurânam* is avowedly based, the identical expression, letter for letter, with the simple omission of the expletive '*kân*' at the end of it. It is not impossible † that the temple-manager added this word, '*kân,*' meaning 'look or 'behold' not as a part of the dying exclamation of the pious king whose image he was then setting up, put as a warning of his own, a word *in terrorem,* to such impudent profanity as would venture to subject to secular law the acts of the holy servants of god. But whether we regard it as a pure expletive or as a sly hint, the absence of '*kân*' will not stand in the way of our tracing the text to Nambi's *Andâdi.* The principle

---

* Verse 7.

† [This is improbable, as the word *kan* preceds the relative participle *enra* "who said,' and thus forms part of the dying king's own words.—E.H.]

word in it is '*namare*'; and no Tamil scholar can feel any scruple as to its being a classical term, unknown to colloquial Tamil, even of the age of Rajaraja, if we may judge from the style of the many voluminous inscriptions of his, now placed before the public through the indefatigable labours of Dr. Hultzsch. The only question possible, to my mind at least, is whether Nambi Andar and Rajaraja's temple-manager might not have both borrowed the expression from some common prior source in verse. But, even in the days of Sekkilar, there was no work extant on the subject except the *Andadi* of Nambi and the famous *Padigam* of Sundara. The expression not being found in the latter, the *Andadi* is the only classical source from which the temple-manager could have borrowed his text, unless, of course, we indulge in the assumption that there existed a poem of which Sekkilar himself was not aware, and imagine also at the same time, that so practical a man as the temple-manager could have been foolish enough to believe that so rare a text could have carried home to the reader of his legend the lesson he was intent on teaching. I, for one, am not prepared to accept such an alternative, as gratuitous as it is unavailing. It seems to me, therefore, that the best course now open to us is to take the expression as borrowed from the *Andadi* itself. I am not aware of any fact that can militate against such a view. On the contrary, all that we are able to glean from the *Andadi*, or the account of its author given by Umapati, goes only to strengthen the easy inference we have drawn. According to this last authority, the patron of Nambi was Rajaraja Abhaya Kulasekhara Chola: and we know from his Tanjore inscriptions that the glorious reign of the great Rajaraja, who in his latter days assumed the title of Sivapadasekhara* was exactly the period when such a grand undertaking as that of Nambi, the compilation of the Tamil *Vedas*, could

---

* *South-Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. II. p. 2.

have been taken up. Seldom does a great deed in letters or religion synchronize with national dejection; nor is it often that such exceptional national prosperity as the Tamils enjoyed under Rajaraja fails to leave its high-water-mark in some branch of learning or other. It is true that Nambi does not mention Rajaraja by name in his *Andadi*, but it is well known that in the host of titles and *birudas* under which he passed, Rajaraja was but one, and one by no means the most prominent in his own days, nor the earliest assumed. Allusion, however, is made to his conquest of Ceylon, one of the early achievements of Rajaraja.* Nambi refers also more than once to the munificence of the Chola, who covered with gold plates the roof of the temple at Chidambaram, and we know this prince is now generally taken to be Parantaka I., the forefather of Rajaraja. But from the tone in which this reference is made, as well as from the fact that Nambi embodies, in his eleventh or last volume of Saiva sacred writings, the poems of Gandaradityavarman, a later prince of the same dynasty, the upper limit of Nambi's age may be safely fixed. After the days of Gandaraditya, we know of no Rajaraja in the same dynasty, who could have encouraged Nambi in his grand undertaking, except the great Rajaraja, whose accession is now calculated to have taken place in A. D. 984-85. † Do not these circumstances then render it extremely probable, if not certain, that Rajaraja's temple-manager was quoting but the words of the great Saiva sage of the period, patronized by his own old glorious sovereign master, when he engraved the inscription near the copper image set up as a practical lesson to the new Chola prince Rajendra, in the third year of his reign? I scruple not to answer in the affirmative, and to conclude that Nambi Andar Nambi was a contemporary of the

---

* Verses 50 and 65.
† See note 8, above.

Rajaraja of the Tanjore inscriptions. * If then Nambi wrote his *Andadi* before the close of the 10th century, when could Sambandha worshipped in that poem have lived? Not surely at the end of the 13th. An inscription ‡ in the Tanjore temple now places it beyond all doubt that Sambandha and his colleagues were objects of even popular worship in the age of Rajaraja. It records the setting up of the images of Nambi Aruranar (*i. e.*) Sundara, Nangai Paravaiyar (*i. e.*) Sundara's consort, Tirunavukkaraiyar and Tirujnanasambandadigal, in the 29th year of the reign of this famous Chola emperor. Adverting to this record, Dr. Hultzsch writes: "This inscription is of great importance for the history of Tamil literature, as it forms a *terminus ad quem* for the time of the reputed authors of the *Devaram*. Dr. Caldwell was inclined to assign this poem to the end of the 13th century. But the present inscription shews that it must have been written before the time of Rajarajadeva." It was more with a sense of relief than of gratification that I received the first intimation, from Dr. Hultzsch himself, of this extraordinary confirmation of the view I ventured to advocate, four or five years previously, against the esteemed and then unquestioned authority of Dr. Caldwell. The inscription under reference puts it now beyond all possible doubt, not only that the *Devaram* was composed before the days of Rajaraja as concluded by Dr: Hultzsch,

---

* [The following will shew that the patron of Nambi Andar Nambi cannot have been the Chola king Rajaraja, who ascended the throne in A. D. 984-85. Among the works incorporated by Nambi in the *Tiru Isaippa* there is a hymn dedicated to the Gangaikonda-Cholesvara temple (see note 90, below). By this is probably meant the temple at Gangaikondacholapuram, which is now called Brihadisvara and which was founded by Gangaikonda Chola. This name was borne by several Chola kings, of whom the earliest was Rajendra Chola, the son and successor of Rajaraja (*ante*, Vol. XXI. p. 323). Even if we suppose that the temple referred to in the *Tiru Isaippa* was built by Rajendra-chola himself some time must have elapsed before the hymn in question could be deemed sacred and worthy of being included in the same class as the *Devara-Hymns*. Consequently Nambi Andar Nambi must have lived long after Rajendara-Chola, who built the temple to which the hymn in the *Tiru-Isaippa* is dedicated. — V. Venkayya.]

‡ *South-Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. II. No. 38.

but also that its authors, including Sambandha, were in the days of Rajaraja objects of worship, as much to the public at large as they were to Nambi Andar Nambi, patronised in all probability, as we have just seen, by the same Chola emperor.

The authors of those hymns must have lived surely long before that century. To estimate the interval that must have separated the compiler, Nambi Andar Nambi from Sambandha and his colleagues, one has only to reflect upon the account, given by so early an authority as Umapati Sivacharya, of the difficulties that the former had to overcome in the course of his collection. Of 1,02,000 *padigams* that originally constituted the *Devara Hymns*, Nambi Andar was able to secure not more than 795. All the imperial authority and influence of the greatest conqueror of the age was of no avail; and the gods † had to interfere for securing even so small a fraction of the sacred songs. If it was so difficult to reclaim and restore to existence the works of Sambandha about the tenth century, can there be any question at least as to the centuries that could not have been graced by the living presence of that saint?

With the evidence offered by the *Tiru Isaippa,* the tenth of the sacred books of the Saivas, we may descend to still earlier ages; but even then, we find Sambandha's apotheosis as complete as it is to-day. Observe, for instance, the tone in which **Nambi Kada Namdi** alludes to him in his **Koyil Tiru-Isaippa.*** To Sundara too, who came after him, the same divine honours are paid. * With regard to the age of this tenth collection, we find a not altogether despicable clue in the name of one of its nine authors. Kandaraditya is the fifth of these nine poets, and his central position in the list

---

† See the *Tirumurai-kanda-Purânam,* verses 18 to 20.
* See verse 4.
* *Ibid* verse 5.

may be taken, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, as significant of the average age of the whole collection. Kandaraditya describes himself as the Chola king of Uraiyur and 'the lord of Tanjore,'* and makes particular mention of a predecessor of his, who 'conquered Madura and Ceylon and covered with gold the Chidambaram temple. ‡ The latter we know, is the famous Parantaka I. that "conquered the king of Lanka and Rajasimha Pandya;"* and we find Kandaraditya in Dr. Hultzsch's Table, as the third in succession from Parantaka. Rajaraja, who ascended the throne in 984, being the tenth chola in the same list **the age of Kandaraditya may be assumed provisionally as the close of the ninth century**, allowing an average of 25 years' reign for the intermediate four Chola kings. If then, by the close of the 9th century, Sambandha's apotheosis was perfect, how preposterous is it to seek for him in the close of the 13th century! Surely, if literary records have any value, Sambandha must have lived long before Kandaraditya, and the only possible question is, how long before?

To answer this question precisely, we have no materials in sacred Tamil literature, so far as I can recollet at present. Still, there are several indications to show that the interval between Kandaraditya and Sambandha must have been of considerable length—nothing short of three or four centuries. Among these, I may mention the following:—

(1) We have already alluded to the fact that **Tanjore** was not in existence in the days of Sambandha, or even in the days of Sundara who came a few generations after him, say, a century. Kandaraditya speaks of himself, as we have just seen, as "the lord of Tanjore." Karur Devar, another of

---

* See his *Tiru-Isaippâ*, verse 10.
‡ See his *Tiru-Isaippâ*, verse 8.
* *South- Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. I. p' 12.

the nine authors of the *Tiru-Isaippa*, describes Tanjore as a flourishing town of considerable extent and importance. He uniformly speaks of it as 'the fortified Tanjai.'* Possibly, the old Tanjai of Sundara came to be called 'Pottai Tanjai' or 'open Tanjore,' by way of contrast to the 'fortified Tanjai' of Karur Devar. Thus then, it was in the interval between Sundara and Kandaraditya, that our mordern Tanjore rose into existence, and developed itself into that fortified and flourishing city of which the latter so proudly speaks of himself as the lord.

(2) Nowhere in the *Devara Hymns*—not even in those dedicated to Chidambaram—is there any mention of the celebrated **Chola, Parantaka I.**, who covered that temple with gold and who preceded Kandaraditya by two or three generations.† This silence is certainly remarkable, considering the unique celebrity of the victorious and religious-minded Chola and the zeal with which every opportunity is taken by later writers to allude to him. Nambi Andar Nambi, for instance, often goes out of his way to compliment Parantaka. In his account of Pugal-Chola, he refers to Parantaka's conquest of Ceylon, in that of Idangali-Nayanar, to his victory over Rajasimha-Pandya and to his roofing the Chidambaram temple with gold, and again in his notice of Kochchengan Chola, he recurs to the same act of extraordinary munificence.‡ Sekkilar, the author of the *Periyapuranam*, is equally anxious to commemorate the pious gift. Is it not then remarkable that, if Sambandha lived after Parantaka, he should not have a word for this glorious monarch, even when he was standing before and celebrating the glories of that very temple which Parantaka covered with gold? The

---

* See his *Tiru-Isaippa* on *Rajarajesvaram*.
† See *South-Indian Inscriptions* Vol. I, p. 112.
‡ See his *Tiruvandadi*, verses 50, 65 and 82.

Brahman priests of the place are referred to, but not the king Parantaka. Appar is as silent on the point as Sambandha, and so too is Sundara, who followed them after some generations. The fact that Nambi Andar Nambi claims three royal saints, of equal rank with Sambandha,—*viz.*, Pugal-Chola, Idangali and Kochchengannan, as remote progenitors of Parantaka, is suggestive of the distance of time by which Sambandha must have preceded Parantaka.

On the other hand, it might be argued that, as the expression *Ponnambalam* occurs in the hymns of Appar,* both **Appar** and his younger contemporary, Sambandha, lived after Parantaka, who on the authority of the *Kongu Chronicle* † is generally believed to have built that 'Golden Hall' at Chidambaram. But this last supposition appears to me a ... ve error, though a common one. *Ponnambalam* first translated by Sanskrit Pandits as *Kanagasabha* and then renderd by modern scholars as the 'Golden Hall,' was originally but an endearing name for the temple at Chidambaram. It is sometimes known simply as 'Koyil' or *The Temple.* Parantaka's covering the roof of it with gold plates was, perhaps, only an illustration of the curious, but well-known, tendency of names to realize themselves. The pious Chettis of to-day, too, assign no other reason for their costly undertaking to cover the roof and walls of the same temple with gilt plates, but the fact that it is called *Ponnambalam*! Probably, in his age Parantaka was actuated by no better reason. At any rate, Nambi Andar Nambi of the eleventh century, who surely ought to know better than the *Kongu Chronicle*, gives Parantaka, in the very act of proudly and flatteringly alluding to his munificence, only the credit of having covered the roof of the hall with gold, but not of having constructed the hall

---

* Ramasvami Pillai's edition, p. 5, verses 4 to 6.

† I am not sure whether the *Kongu Chronicle* itself is responsible for this error, or only its translators. But the Leyden grant speaks of Parantaka as only having '*covered* the Saiva temple at Vyaghragrahara with gold.'

itself. * It must be further remembered that according to Sekkilar, † his own patron Anapáya, had also the honour of gilding the roof of this same temple. Umapati Sivacharya, who lived in the 14th century, and to whose statements we are bound to accord some consideration, ascribes the building of the Golden Hall and the town itself to a certain Hiranyavarman of immemorial antiquity. ‡ But whoever built the Ponnambalam, in the days of Manikka vasagar, or well nigh the classical, or the *Sangam*, period of the Tamil literature, the name had not any more conotation about it than its well known synonym Puliyur, or 'Tiger-village.' From the mere occurrence, therefore, of the expression *Ponnambalam* in the hymns of Appar, we cannot jump§ to the conclusion that Appar lived after Parantaka. Such an inference would be not only unwarranted, but absurd also, in the face of the facts we have mentioned above. In fact, we have unmistakable evidence to shew that in the *Devara* period, Chidambaram was not even a Chola possession but a strong-hold of the Pallavas.‡ After it was re-annexed † to the Chola dominions under the dynasty of Parantaka, the town did not go out of the hands of his successors, till long after the days of Anapaya, the patron of Sekkilar. The period of Pallava supremacy at Chidambaram must have been,

---

* "*Mugadu-kongil kanakam=aninda,*" *Tiruvandadi*, verse 65.

† See the *Periyapuranam*, Payiram, verse 8.

‡ See the *Hiranyavarma-Sarga* of the *Koyil-Puranam*. Hiranyavarman is here said to have constructed the temple with a gold roof: and it is not imossible, that Parantaka was himself anticipated in his 'golden feat' by a remote predecessor of his, exactly as the Chettis of our days are by himself. Or may it be that the temple was called *Pon-Ambalam*, because built by Hiranyavarman? As to the era that Hiranyavarman is said to have commenced, see the *Tiruvila-Sargam*, verse 5.

§ For an example of such a jump in the dark, see *The Madura Country* Part III. Chapter II. p. 63.

‡ See Sundara's *Koyil-Padigam*, verse 9, where he speakes of the god of Chidambaram as a terror to those who refuse rightful subsidies to the Pallava rulers.

† For according to the *Koyil-Puranam* :— the town was founded by a Chola prince. Again, in the *Periya-puranam*, the Bramans of Chidambaram are said to have declined to crown Kurruva-Nayanar on the ground that the Cholas were alone entitled to that honor.

therefore, long anterior to the reign of Parantaka; — an inference that strongly supports the conclusion we have otherwise arrived at, with respect to the relative age of Sambandha and that sovereign.

(3) The only Chola that Sambandha refers to is the 'red-eyed' Kochchengannan,—the hero of an archaic poem of Poygaiyar, called *Kalvali-Narpadu*,—one of the eighteen didactic pieces compiled by the Pandits of the old Madura college. The dynasty of Parantaka I. is a distinctly different line, probably an offshoot of an alliance of the old Chola family with the Pallavas of Kanchi. *Kalingattu Parani*, the historical poem we have already referred to, seems to break off rather abruptly* with this red-eyed king, in its poetical account of the old Chola line, and to begin afresh when it takes up the story of the dynasty of Parantaka. A long period of confusion would seem to have prevailed between the demise of Kochchengannan and the establishment of the new Chola-Pallava dynasty to which Parantaka and Kandaraditya belonged. Sambandha, most probably, lived in this period of transition, when the old Chola kingdom had gone to pieces, and the new Pallava-Chola kingdom was in the course of formation. At any rate, such is the impression left on my mind by the *Devara-Hymns*, and if it is confirmed by the experiences of others, the estimate here formed of the interval between Sambandha, in whose memory the old Chola line was still fresh and green, and Kandaraditya, one of the later princes of the new dynasty, will not be regarded as excessive.

(4) The same conclusion would be forced on us, if we consider the practical extinction that had come over the Buddhistic religion by the time of Kandaraditya. The creed

---

* See canto viii. verse 19; but much stress cannot be laid on the arrangement of verses in this work. The whole poem requires careful editing by capable Tamil scholars in touch with the modern historical spirit of inquiry.

that was, in the days of Appar and Sambandha, so universally predominant, as to lead to the former's persecution, and to need the curse of the latter in every one of his *padigams*, evidently attracts little attention from the authors of the *Tiru-Issaippa*.

Do not such considerations as these (and they may be multiplied, if necessary) * raise a strong presumption in favour of a long interval of time between Sambandha and Kandaraditya of the ninth century ?

Thus then, we need not go beyond the sacred literature of the Saivas, to establish two important positions, with respect to the question in hand. In the first place, the facts I have mentioned enable us to trace the influence of Sambandha successively backwards through the 14th, 12th and 10th centuries to the close of the 9th, the age we have assigned to Kandaraditya. If there is any force in facts, these prove beyond all doubt, that **Sambandha Could not have lived later than the 9th century.** In the second place, certain other typical facts that I have grouped together conjointly point to a probability of his having lived a considerable time, say three or four centuries, before the Chola king and poet, Kandaraditya. But there are one or two other considerations to enforce the same conclusion, and I shall now proceed to explain them.

Let us, for example, inquire whether **Sanskrit literature** can throw any light on the subject, corroborating our position or otherwise. From the summary inquiry we held in a previous part of this paper, we found reasons for believing that Sambandha preceded, not only Ramanuja and Madhvacharya, but Sankara also, the greatest of modern Hindu

* For instance, the rise of the temple of Gangaikonda Cholesvara at the capital of the revived Chola dynasty of Parantaka, which finds no place in the *Devara Hymns*, but which has a *Tiru-Isaippa* for itself.

philosophers. Now the age of Sankaracharya is diversely estimated. The Hon'ble Mr. Telang* adduces certain sound reasons for placing Sankara in the sixth century, while Dr. Fleet† has equally cogent reasons for believing that he lived about 630-655 A.D. The latest date yet assigned to this philosopher, as, for instance, by Mr. Pathak, is the eighth century. We have then in Sankara an Indian celebrity who lived about two or three centuries before Kandaraditya, or much about the time to which we have been able to trace Sambandha by means of purely literary records in Tamil. The history of the religious development in Southern India, pointing as it does in the same direction, raises a strong antecedent probability in favour of finding Sanbandha somewhere about the time of, or immediately before, Sankara.

The presumption thus raised is verified beyond all expectations by a verse of Sankaracharya himself. The tone of veneration in which this philosopher refers to Sambandha proves beyond doubt, not only that the latter lived before him, but that there was a considerable interval of time between the two. The verse referred to is the 76th in a poem called *Saundaryalahari*, a well-known and evidently genuine work of Sankara, and particularly sacred with the Shaktas and Tantrikas. The first forty stanzas, which by themselves constitue the first part called *Anandalahari*, are especially so with them; and they do not allow their composition to be ascribed even to Sankaracharya himself. That revered philosopher is not sufficiently remote in their view; and they vouchsate to him only the honour of having completed this holy fragment, found inscribed on the mountain of Kailasa by a certain Rishi called Puspadanta, and handed down to Sankara by his master, Gaudapada‡. The epigraphical

---

* *Ante*, Vol. XIII. p. 95.

† *Ante*, Vol. XVI. p. 41.

‡ See the Introduction to the Tamil *Saundaryalaghri* by Ellappa Navalar verses 3 and 4.

tradition, however, does not affect the authenticity of the verse under reference; for all parties agree that the last sixty *slokas* of the work are of the Acharya's own making. It runs thus :—

"O daughter of the mountain! I consider thy breast milk an overflow of the sea of wisdom from thy heart. For by tasting it, the '**Dravida child**' to whom it was so mercifully granted, became such a charming poet among the great poets."*

To thos ethat know the story of **Sambandha**, the allusion is as clear as daylight. Even to purely Sanskrit scholars, the knowledge of the incident referred to ought not to be difficult of access. They have only to open chapter 47 of the Sanskrit treatise *Bhaktavilasa*, where Sambandha's life is given in full detail. We cite below three verses† which

---

* तव स्तन्यं मन्ये धरणिधरकन्ये हृदयतः
पयः पारावारं परिवहति सारस्वतमिति ।
दयावत्या दत्तं द्रविडशिशुरास्वाद्य तव यत्
कवीनां प्रौढानामजनि कमनीयः कवयिता ॥

† अथ मूर्तिमती देवी जगतां जननी शिवा ।
आगत्यास्यान्तिकं बालमङ्के कृत्वा शुचिस्मिता ॥
दुग्ध्वा स्तन्यामृतापूर्णं चषकं हेमनिर्मितम् ।
ददौ गृहीत्वा तद्वक्त्रे क्षुधितस्सच तत्पपौ ॥
वेदान्तबोधमयमम्बिकया वितीर्णं
स्तन्यामृतं तदनु पीतवतोऽर्भकस्य ।
उद्गारपूर इव सूक्तिसुधाप्रवाहो
वक्त्रादजायत जगत्त्रयतापहारी ॥

narrate the miraculous nursing of the Dravida child by the goddess Parvati. That this very incident was the most distinguishing feature in the life of Sambandha, will be clear from the opening verse of the chapter which may be thus rendered:—

"O saint! I shall now tell you the story of Jnanasambandha, to whom the daughter of the Himalaya mountain vouchsafed the nectar of her breast milk, and acted, therefore, the part of a mother."*

The interpretation of Lakshmidhara,† otherwise known as Lólla, which indentifies 'the Dravida child,' with the author Sankaracharya himself, deserves therefore no refutation. It is, no doubt, on account of such blunders as these, that Bhaskararaya, who flourished in the last century, treats him with such unqualified contempt. "Such nonsense," says Bhaskara in another connexion, "can proceed only from madness."‡

---

* अथ वक्ष्ये कथां ज्ञानसंबन्धस्य मुनिश्वर ।
स्तन्यामृतप्रदानेन यस्य धात्री हिमाद्रिजा ॥

† My attention was first drawn to this interpretation of Lakshmidhara by Mr. V, Venkayya, the (then) Assistant Epigraphist to the Madras Government. It would appear, Prof. Aufrecht adopts the same mistaken interpretation in his catalogue of *Oxford Manuscripts.* But the absurdity of it is nevertheless self-evident. The Acharya was no poet at all; his fame rests entirely upon his philosophical exegetics called *Bhashya.* To identify the *Dravidasisu* with Sankara himself would be, therefore, to charge that revered thinker with unbound arrogance; but even supposing he had the vanity to speak of himself as 'the distinctly lovable among great poets,' where do we find any tradition of his having been suckled by Parvati, when he was an infant? The old metrical Tamil translation of this verse (see p. 118) by Virai Kaviraya Panditar gives the correct rendering here adopted. The distinguished Tamil poet, of the last century. Saiva Ellappa Navalar, proceeds also upon the same view in his commentary on that translation. Indeed, the absurdity of Lolla's interpretation is so patent, that every Sanskrit Pandit (including that formost Sanskrit scholar in Southern India, the valia Koil Tamburan of Travancore, to whom I shewed the stanza) heartily agrees with me in condemning it.

‡ इति लोल्लेन यत्प्रलपितं तत्प्रामादिकम् ॥

The word *'sisu'* or 'child' in the verse which has given room for such gross misapprehension, is peculiarly appropriate when applied to Sambandha. The proper name in Tamil of the famous saint, at the time when the goddess was supposed to have appeared to him, was, as I have already pointed out, **Pillai** or **Aludaiya Pillai**—literally meaning 'child.'

In his *Sivabhujamga** and *Sivanandalahari*†, the Acharya pays similar homage to four other saints, of whom one was

---

* न शक्नोमि कर्तुं परद्रोहलेशं
कथं प्रीयसे त्वं न जाने गिरीश ।
तदा हि प्रसन्नोऽसि कस्यापि कान्ता-
सुतद्रोहिणो वा पितृद्रोहिणो वा ॥
॥ इति शिवभुजंगः ॥

[From the absence of any reference to Sankara in the *Tiruttondattogai* of Sundara, it may be inferred that the former lived after the latter. The verse quoted above supports this view. The expression *kanta-drohin*, 'one who betrayed his wife,' probably refers to Sundara, who, without the knowledge of his wife Paravai, married a woman named Sangili at Tiruvottiyur near Madras. If the *Sivabhujamga* is a genuine work of Sankara, this reference would establish that he lived after Sundara. The other two devotees, who are referred to in the same verse by the terms *suta-drohin* and *pitri-drohin*, are Siruttonda, who cooked his only son for the sake of Siva, i.e., the disguise of a devotee, and Chandesvara, who cut off the leg of his father when the latter interferred with his worship of Siva—V. V.]

† मार्गावर्तितपादुका पशुपतेरङ्गस्य कूर्चायते
गण्डूषाम्बुनिषेचनं पुररिपोर्दिव्याभिषेकायते ।
किंचिद्भक्षितमांसशेषकवलं नव्योपहारायते
भक्तिः किं न करोत्यहो वनचरो भक्तावतंसायते ॥
॥ इति शिवानन्दलहरी ॥

This verse refers to Kannappa-Nayanar, who is believed to have worshipped Siva at Kalahasti in the North Arcot district. A hill south of Kalahasti even now bears a shrine called Kannappesvara.—E. H.]

a contemporary of Sambandha, and another a huntsman or *Kirata* by birth, but none of them half as well known as our Brahman saint of the Kaundinya *gotra*.

The conclusion then is irresistible, that **in the days of Sankaracharya, Sambandha was a well known character**— an inspired poet, worthy of being spoken of as the distinctly lovable among the greatest poets of India, and a saintly person, sufficiently remote in time for it to be then believed that he had been suckled by the goddess Parvati herself. Taking then the age assigned to Sankara by Dr. Fleet, we may now safely assert that Sambandha could not have lived later than the seventh century; and that in all probability, there was an appreciable distance of time between Sankara and himself. What this interval actually was, it is imposible to determine with the existing materials. We cannot, however, be for wrong if we take it as a century or two.

That we are not attributing too high an antiquity, will appear from the age usually assigned to Sambandha by enlightened native scholars, of whom I shall here mention but two or three.

Mr. Simon Casie Chitty, the author of the *Ceylon Gezetteer* and the *Tamil Plutarch*, says in the latter work of his:— "In our opinion, as the date given in the *Cholapurvapattayam* for the accession of Seraman Perumal seems to admit of no doubt, we may place the period of the existence of Sundara and his two fellow champions in the fifth century of the christian era for a certainty; and there-by clear it from the monstrous chronology of the *Puranas*."* Mark the last expression. In the opinion of this native Christian Tamil scholar, to assing Sundara to the fifth century—not the 13th as advocated by

---

* See p. 21.

Dr. Caldwell—is *only* to clear the age of that author from the monstrous chronoloy of the *Puranas*! If Sundra lived in the fifth, Sambanda, who, as we know, preceded him by a few generations, must have lived somewhere about the fourth century. But until we know more of the history of the *Chola-purvapattayam* here depended upon, we cannot afford to be as positive as Mr. Chitty. We know also, on the other hand, the slippery indefiniteness that is inherent in so vague and general adesignation as Seraman Perumal,—perhaps as misleading as its notorious counter-part, Sundara-Pandya. Any how, the opinion of so well-informed a person as Mr. Casie Chitty, and the *Cholapurvapattayam* he cites, cannot but show that it is not a violent assumption to allow an interval of a century or two between Sambandha and Sankara of the seventh century.

The second native scholar I have in view is Mr. Damodaram Pillai, the erudite editor of so many valuable Tamil classics. He is decidedly of opinion that Kun Pandya (and therefore Sambandba) lived more than 2,000 years ago. To support this conclusion, primarily based upon the usual Puranic lists of Pandyas, he makes a statement * which, if historically correct, ought to enable us to arrive at a more or less accurate approximation. The present head of the Tirujnanasambandha *Mata* of Madura, it would appear, claims himself to be the 114th in lineal succession from the Siva devotee, in whose name the monastery is established. If this assertion is well-founded, it will indicate, no doubt, a lapse

---

* Preface to *Virasoliyam*, p. 17. According to Mr. Nelson, the present head is the 277th hereditary manager. Mr. Damodaram Pillai explains the discripancy as due to Mr. Nelson's including in his account even those anointed as heirs-apparent. It is with the deepest regret that I have now to record a change in the personnel of this *mata*. The late revered head of the monastery, Rai Bahadur Swaminatha Desika Swamigal, breathed his last on the morning of the 29th January 1896. No Hindu *mata* had ever au abler or more enlightened head.

of fifteen to twenty centuries, according to the average we assume for each of the 113 deceased heads of the monastery. To urge an antiquity of 2,000 years, appears to me to be rather unsafe. It would scarcely leave time for Jainism to develope itself in Southern India, and to assume those formidable proportions, which brought about the reaction in the age of Sambandha. But, however that may be, Mr. Damodaram Pillai himself anounces, in another foot-note,* a fact that cannot but affect the value of the testimony for scientific purposes. The present *mata* in Madura, it would appear, was established only as a branch or subordinate monastery to another of the same name in Tinnevelly, of which, however, no trace is now left. Nor was the Tinnevelly *mata* itself the original institution? Until, therefore, more of the history of this interesting institution is known, particularly of the way in which the tradition as to lineal succession has been preserved, it is possible to exaggerate the probative force of the statement in question. But we are citing the fact and Mr. Damodaram Pillay's conviction only as shewing that, in the opinion of competent native scholars, **to assign Sambandha to the fifth or the sixth century is not to advocate an extravagant theory.**

The Hon'ble P. Kumaraswami † of Colombo argues that, since **the miracle of the vanni tree** with which Sambandha is associated in the *Tiruvilaiyadal-Puranam*, is alluded to by the heroine of the *Silappadigaram*, said to have been born in the reign of Karikala, the grandfather of Senguttuvan, who was visited by Gajabahu of Ceylon between the years 113-135 A. D., the age of Sambandha ought to be accepted as at least prior to the birth of Christ. Supposing the age of the exceedingly interesting poem, *Silappadigaram*, is determined beyond all question with the help of the old chronicles of

---

0 Preface to *Virasoliyam*, p. 20.

† His last letter to me on this subject is dated 1st March 1895.

Ceylon, where more than one Gajabahu is mentioned. I am not sure whether the first link in the chain of argument, which alone connects Sambhandha with that ancient classic, will be accepted by all parties as sound and irrefragable. For, however admirable as a work of art, the *Tiruvilaiyadal-Puranam* is not distinguished for historical accuracy, and it stands alone in associating the *vanni* tree story with Sambandha. Nor does it agree in its account with the earlier and the more authoratatative treatise, the *Periyapuranam,* even as far as the latter goes. As the matter is of some real importance, I would first solicit attention to the difference in the two versions of the tradition itself.

The *Periyapuranam* version of the story is briefly this:— A trader of the Vaniga caste in the town of Vaippur, by name Taman, promises to give in marriage to his nephew* the eldest of his seven daughters, but tempted by lucre, he repeatedly forgets his promise and gives away to different other parties his first six daughters in succession. The seventh, moved by love and pity for the disappointed suitor, escapes with him, proposing to solemnise their marriage in the village of the poor nephew. On their way, they halt at a place called Maruganur,† near Negapatam, where Sambandha was then sojourning. Here the intended bridegroom is bitten by a snake, and in a few hours he expires, leaving his lonely love in indescribable sorrow. Her cries of anguish, however, reach the ears of Sambandha who, repairing to the spot and becoming aware of the melancholy situation, improvises a hymn invoking the mercy of the local deity; and the man revives as if from sleep. Sambandha then observing the decorous behaviour of the Vaniga woman

---

* It is usual in this caste to marry a maternal uncle's daughter.

† The name of this village is significant. It means the *town of the nephew.* Could it be that it was so named because of this very incident? If it bore this name in the days of Sambandha, would not the tradition be still older?

who, because a virgin, would, neither in the worst moments of her sad tribulation nor in the rebound of joy, go within touching distance of her lover, although he was but her cousin, causes the wedding to be solemnised at once, so that they might be a help to one another even on their way; and the married couple resume their journey; while he himself returns to Sengattangudi at the request of that famous devotee who, when required, scrupled not to slaughter and cook his only child as food for Siva. Such is the *Periyapuranam* version* of the story from which the *Tiruvilaiyadal*‡ chooses to differ in some essential particulars. Shocked probably by the amount of freedom which the earlier version would allow the fairer sex, this comparatively recent production gives an account of its own of the way in which the lonely couple came to be travelling together. Instead of the seven daughters and the six successive disappointments to the poor nephew, this *Purana* would allow but one daughter to the Vaniga merchant, whose name and native place, however, it does not care to specify. This Vaniga again is here not a sordid but a superior person, who, instead of selling his daughters as in the old tradition, piously promises away all his wealth, and his only child too, to a nephew of his in Madura, who, to boot, is already married and well settled in life. Some time after making known to his townsmen his wish and will, the trader dies, and his widow dies with him on his funeral pyre—a poor substitue for the more natural acts of feminine heroism which this latter version feels bound to suppress The fortunate nephew in Madura is then for the first time informed of the gifts made to him by his deceased uncle, including his only daughter, and he

---

* See the *Tirujnanasambandhamurti-Puranam*, verses 473-484. The particular hymn of Sambandha referred to by the *Purana* does not lend any support to the story; on the other hand, verses 3 and 10 of it are distinctly against any such construction: see Ramasvami Pillai's edition, p. 622.

‡ See the *Tiruvilaiyadal Puranam*, chapter 64.

forthwith hurries to the spot to remove them all to his own city. But for reasons not so easy to understand, he sends in advance, not only all the treasures he so inherits, but also all his relatives, excepting the virgin girl—an arrangement extremely unnatural from a Hindu point of view. It is thus, the couple come to travel together according to this *Purana.* The cobra bite and death, the subsequent revival through the virtue of Sambandha's verse, and the improvised marriage ceremony at the instance of that saint, all follow in due course, though there would seem to be no necessity for the unseemly haste in that last act, since according to the *Purana* there were all along plenty of servants, man and maid, near at hand to render all needful service on the way. Such are the two versions of the story, and it does not require much insight to see what liberties are taken with the old tradition in the later of the two. I mention the fact, as I believe it would prove helpful to us in appreciating the historical value of the episode, which this latter version adds to the story, and on which the argument of my friend entirely turns.

The scene of this episode is laid in Madura. To that city the married couple return, and in due course is born a son. A childish quarrel between this boy and the children of the first wife gives occasion for an altercation between the mothers, during the course of which the first wife ventures to question the legal status of the second, and tauntingly inquires as to what sort of proof the latter could offer for her alleged marriage on the way. Unable to adduce better evidence, the innocent woman cites the *vanni* tree, the temple well and the Siva *linga* before which the marriage was solemnised at the melancholy spot of cobra fame, which, according to this *Purana*, is not Maruganur as in the earlier version, but Puraṃbiyam,* which I am unable to identify. "Good

---

* [See *South-Indian Inscriptions,* Vol. II. p. 381, note 1.—E. H.]

witnesses and meet indeed!" jocosely replies her rival; and it may indeed well surprise any one why she had such confidence on these inanimate objects, and none at all on any of the many servants of her husband who according to the *Purana* accompanied her from her father's house to Madura, and some of whom at least must have witnessed the rite, even supposing Sambandha and his large retinue had retired to their lodgings before the actual ceremony was performed. Anyhow, one and all the three witnesses cited did present themselves next morning, within the precincts of the Madura temple, to the joy of innocent faith and the discomfiture of ill-natured jealousy. Such is the episode of the *vanni* tree miracle* found tacked on to the story in the *Tiruvilaiyadal-Puranam;* and the question for us is, whether, on the strength of this *Purana*, the incident may be taken to have occurred in the life of that very Vaniga lady whose marriage was arranged at Maruganur by Sambandha.

As already pointed out, the earlier and the more reliable treatise, the *Periyapuranam*, is silent on this point. But this negative evidence in itself cannot carry much weight, since it may be met by the consideration that it is no part of the business of that *Purana* to relate all the incidents in the lives of every one with whom its own heroes come in contact. There being, then, as far as I know, no extraneous evidence, for or against, the accuracy of the episode has to be accepted or rejected, according to the estimate we may form of the general historical veracity of the *Purana* in which it is found. It is not possible in this connection to open an explicit discussion on the historical value of the *Tiruvilaiyadal-*

---

* The miraculous nature of the incidents here dealt with is no objection to their being used, under certain conditions, for sifting historical testimony. If tradition invariably ascribes a particular incident, however miraculous, to a given historical individual, it serves in innumerable ways, direct and indirect, in estimating the age of that individual. Subjective belief in such cases is tantamount to objective existence.

Puranam, but from what has been already said with regard to the version contained in it of the earlier part of the very story in question, I trust it may be inferred that it is not altogether a safe ground to build historical theories on*. My own impression is that in adding on this episode, the *Purana* is but trying to patch together two independent old traditions. Who knows whether this penultimate chapter in the *Purana* is itself not written to flatter the pride of the Nayaka rulers of the times?† That this and the two chapters immediately preceding it should have Sambandha for their hero, would seem also not devoid of meaning, when we remember that the author belonged to a monastery which still claims Sambandha for its founder. It is quite possible, too, that the life of Manikavasagar is given in an earlier chapter just to enable the author to conclude his work with the life of Sambandha, the patron saint of his convent. But such speculations apart, I would earnestly beg to repeat that, for my part, I would prefer to wait till better evidence is found to take the tradition of the *vanni* tree miracle as originating with or in the time of Tirujnanasambandha.

This position would appear to be further confirmed by the way in which the miracle is alluded to in the *Silappadigaram*. There the heroine couples with the tree that appeared in the temple to attest the marriage, not a well and the Siva *linga* as in the *Purana*, but a kitchen. § The Vaniga lady for whose sake the tree appeared, is claimed again as a native of Pumbugar in the Chola kingdom, and not a nameless sea-port town in the Madura country as in the *Purana*. The version of the episode in the *Tiruvilaiyadal-Puranam*

* I mean no disparagement to the *Purana* as a literary work. So charming is its diction and so great its powers of clear description that for years together I have been in the habit of reading a few verses of it every day.

† The word Nayaka appears several times in this chapter itself; see for instance verse 11.

§ See the *Silappadigaram*, chapter xxi. lines 5 to 35.

then would seem to differ in essential particulars from the one referred to in the *Silappadigaram,* nearly as much as the earlier part of the same story in the work does from what is found in the more trustworthly treatise of Sekkilar. Taking then into consideration these suspicious variations in details as well as the conspicuous absence of the historical sense in the *Tiruvilaiyadal*, I humbly submit, I am not prepared to take the allusion in the *Silappadigaram* to the *vanni* tree miracle as proving that Sambandha lived before the composition of that indisputably old and genuine classic. On the other hand, critics may not be wanting who may look upon this very allusion in the more ancient work as discrediting the date assigned to the miracle in the *Tiruvilaiyadal.* Nevertheless the opinion of so able and enlightened a gentleman cannot but be of immense value for the purpose for which it is here cited, *viz.* to attest the modesty of the theory I am advocating.

To the opinions of these native scholars, I am glad, I am now in a position to add the view of so esteemed an authority in South-Indian epigraphy as Dr. Hultzsch. He writes: " As poems in the Tamil language are thus proved to have been composed in the time of the early Cholas " (*i.e.*, Karikala and Kochchengannan), " there is no objection to assigning the authors of the *Devaram* to the same period."* The moderation of the hypothesis here advocated which assigns them to a later period cannot, I hope, be then questioned.

For after all, we allow, it is only a hypothesis. **All that we are sure of is that the age of Sankaracharya is the lower limit of the age of Sambandha** ;—whatever century we assign to Sankara, the sixth, seventh or the eigth as may be hereafter finally determined,—that century will form the latest period that can be assigned to Sambandha. We reach this conclusion

* *South-Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. II. p. 153.

in a diversity of ways. The religious history of Southern India points to the priority of Sambandha to Sankara. The absence of all traces of non-dualistic philosophy in the *Devara* songs is a well-known fact enforcing the same conclusion. The independent historical facts gathered from the sacred Saiva works, not only enable us to trace the influence of Sambandha, step by step, from the thirteenth backwards to the close of the ninth century, but raise also a strong presumption of his having lived three or four centuries earlier. And finally, the verse we have quoted from Sankaracharya's *Saundaryalahari* serves to demonstrate that Sambandha did actually precede that revered philosopher. We scruple not, therefore, to maintain that the age of Sankara constitutes the lower limit to the age of Sambandha. If with Dr. Fleet, we believe that Sankara lived between 630 and 655 A. D., the opening of the seventh century is the latest possible period that can be assigned to Sambandha.

We should be glad, if with equal certainty, **the upper limit** could also be ascertained. It is impossible to undertake this part of our problem without transgressing the bounds we have set to this paper. We can here only indicate one of the main lines of inquiry we should like to pursue. We have already pointed out that Sambandha frequently refers to the famous Chola prince **Kochchengannan**, the hero of the classical war-song called *Kalavali*. On one occasion, he speaks of a temple at Vaigal, a village near Kumbakonam, as having been constructed by Kochchengannan in "former days."* Clearly then, Sambandha must have lived a considerable time after this temple-building red-eyed Chola. But when did this red-eyed Chola live? The question opens a field of inquiry as wide as the whole range of ancient classics in Tamil—a sphere obviously more beset with historical difficulties than that of

---

* *Vaiyaga-magildara Vaigan-mer-rrisai, Seyya-kan-Valavan mun seyda Koyile;* Ramasvami Pillai's edition, p. 442.

the sacred Saiva literature with which we have been hitherto concerned.

The farther we proceed into antiquity, the darker naturally becomes the view around; and it is well, for more than one reason, to leave this part of our subject to be taken up on a future occasion, for an independent and separate handling which the range and importance of those ancient classics would otherwise also demand.

All that we would, therefore, now say with regard to the upper limit of the age of Sambandha is, that it would be found in the age of Kochchengannan. Sambandha, in fact, forms the line of partition between ancient and modern Tamil. With regard to the lower limit, no such indefiniteness need any longer be allowed. The facts we have mentioned demonstrate as conclusively as the nature of the subject will admit, that Sambandha could not have lived later than the opening years of the seventh century.

In conclusion, we may indicate the main purposes subserved by this paper.

(1) It gives a bird's-eye view of the sacred Tamil literature of the Saivas.

(2) It shews the position of Sambandha as a Saiva saint and a lyrical Tamil poet, and also as the first great adversary of Jainism in Southern India.

It controverts the opinions of Dr. Burnell with regard to the antiquity and value of Tamil literature.

(4) It proves the utterly unfounded nature of the hypothesis advocated by Dr. Caldwell and Mr. Nelson, with regard to the age of Sambandha.

(5) An attempt is made to trace an outline of the religious history of Southern India with a view to fix the relative ages of Sambandha, Sankara, and Râmânuja.

(6) Facts are deduced to prove with the help of the latest archæological researches that Sambandha could not have lived in any period later than the early years of the seventh century, leaving the upper limit to be fixed by an inquiry into the age of Kochchengannan.

Standing as Sambandha does at the close of the ancient and the opening of the modern period of Tamil literature, the attempt we have made here to fix his age will, it is hoped, prove of some service to further inquiries into the history of the Tamil language and of Dravidian civilization in general. At any rate, I earnestly trust, the few mile-stones in that history discovered in the course of this investigation will serve to ward off future speculation from altogether losing its way.

POSTSCRIPT.

Since the above was written, epigraphy has offered **a direct solution** of the long-standing question as to the age of Tirujnanasambandha. Visiting Conjeveram in December 1895, I found that the archaic Pallava temple, now called **Kailasanatha**, is the same as the one called Kachchi Mettali in the *Devara Hymns*. If Mettali means the 'Western Shrine,' the name is certainly well suited to the direction in which the shrine now stands. But I am afraid it is a mere mistake for *Ḳattali* or 'Thirukkattali,' a name which occurs in several of the inscriptions of the temple.* The substitution of 'Tirukkattali' for 'Tirumettali,' wherever found in the hymns, only improves their rhythm. The local *oduvars* or habitual reciters of the hymns know of no place in Conjeveram answering to the name 'Tirumettali, † and patient inquiry on the spot leads to the same nescience. We have therefore either to suppose that the temple of **Tirumettali**, celebrated in the *Devara Hymns*, is now gone to such ruins as to leave no trace whatever of it behind, or to take that name to be an error for Tirukkattali. I decidedly prefer the latter course, as the result of all the inquiries I was able to make at the spot. Other temples commemorated in the hymns are yet in existence, and if Tirukkattali were not Tirumettali, there would be no mention in the *Devara Hymns* of the one temple in Conjeveram, which, of all the shrines, is the most ancient-looking. If the identity, then, is permitted of Tirukkattali with the Tirumettali of the printed *Devara Hymns*, an important inference will force itself upon us. From the published inscriptions of the Tirukkattali or the Kailasanatha temple, otherwise known also as **Rajasimhesvara**, we learn that it

---

* *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. I. Nos. 82 to 88 and 145 to 150.

† [There is, however, a temple named Mettali in the Weavers' Quarter See my *Annual Report* for 1892-93, p. 4 f., where I have tried to identify those Conjeveram temples which are mentioned in the *Periyapuranam* and *Nàlàyiraprabandham*.—E. Hultzsch.]

was built by the Pallava prince **Rajasimha**, the son of Ugradanda, the destroyer of Ranarasika.* We owe to Dr. Hultzsch the identification of Ranarasika with Ranaraga, the Western Chalukya prince, † and if he is correct in it, it naturally follows that our Rajasimha was at least a contemporary of Pulikesin I., the immediate successor of Ranaraga on the Chalukya throne. Now Pulikesin I. being the direct predecessor of Kirtivarman, whose first year of reign was Saka 487 or A. D. 567, Dr. Hultzsch rightly places the construction of the temple of Tirukkattali or Rajasimhesvara about **550 A.D.**§ If, then, we are right in taking the word Tirumettali in the *Devara Hymns* of Appar', ‡ the elder contemporary of Sambandha, as a mistake or an equivalent for Tirukkattali, the middle year of the 6th century would form the upper limit of the age of that great Tamil saint, which we left to be determined by an inquiry into the age of the Chola king Kochchengannan.

But a still closer and safer approximation seems to be rendered possible by a circumstance recorded both in Mr. Foulkes' grant of Pallavamalla and in the Kuram grant respecting a successor of our Rajasimha. These two important Pallava documents agree in declaring that **Narasimhavarman I.** defeated the Chalukya king Pulikesin and destroyed his

---

* *Ibid. No* 24. Verse 11 of this Sanskrit inscription would seem to offer some justification for the modern popular name of the temple. It is there said to rob Kailasa of its beauty, and probably it came to be called Kailasanathar koyil on that account

† *Ibid.* p. 11. § *Ibid,* p. 12.

‡ Ramavsami Pillai's edition, p. 998. That the Pallavas continued in possession of Conjeveram later on is proved by a line of Sundara, who, in the last verse of his hymn, speaks of it as 'the great and fortified city of the Pallavas,' see p. 999.

capital Vatapi, * *i. e.* Badami in the Bombay Persidency. Now, since, according to Dr. Fleet, Vatapi was wrested from the Pallavas and made the Western Chalukya capital only in the days of Pulikesin I., the contemporary of Rajasimha, the founder of the Conjeveram Kailasanatha temple,—the Pulikesin, who was overthrown by Narasimha I. of the same line and in whose reign that capital was destroyed, may be safely identified, as has been done by Dr. Hultzsch, with Pulikesin II., who reigned from about **Saka 532**, † or about the early years of the 7th Christian century. Now it will be observed that, throughout the foregoing pages, we have been trying to make out that we must look for Sambandha somewhere in this century. It is therefore with no small gratification we note Mr. Venkayya's discovery that **the conquest of Vatapi**, almost the only event we are sure of in the history of the Tamil countries for that century, is recorded in the *Periyapuranam* as a memorable fact in the life of *Siruttonda*, a contemporary of our Sambandha.‡ According to this *Purana*, the historical veracity of which we have more than once in the preceding pages found reason to assert, one of the many military exploits of Siruttonda in the service of his royal

---

* Vatapi, as known to the *Puranas* is the Protean brother of the miserly giant Ilvalan of the city of Manimati, who used to spite his Brahman visitors, and to save his money at the same time, by changing for the nonce Vatapi into a lamb and cooking him up as food for his holy guests. For Vatabi, once within the intestines of the unsuspecting Brahmans, would turn into a goring goat and find his way out, to be similarly used when fresh visitors arrive. The brothers continued to play the trick till Agastya came round, raising subscriptions to celebrate his nuptials with his bride Lopamudra. Vatapi, changed and cooked up as usual, found the peritoneum of the Tamil sage too tough to be rent open, and his mortal parts were accordingly digested, his ghost alone passing out as wind! What the meaning of this old myth may be, it is hard to discover. It turns up, however, in almost all the leading *Puranas*, and the Tamilas are particularly proud of it, as it redounds to the glory of the Vedic Rishi, whom tradition however, absurdly reckons as the founder of their language. For a version of the story in Sanskrit, see *Mahabharata, Aranyaparva, Tirthayatrasarga*, chapter 96.

† *South-Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. I. page 11.

‡ See Mr. Venkayya's third article on *the Study of Vernaculars* in the *Madras Christian College Magazine* for November 1893, and *Ep. Ind.* Vol. IV. p. 277 f.

master was the conquest of Vâtâpi "in the north" which, in the picturesque language of the poem, he is said "to have reduced to dust."* Who then could have been that royal master in whose service Siruttonda reduced Vatapi to dust but the Pallava king Narasimhavarman, whom the Kuram grant and the grant of Pallavamalla agree in distinguishing as the destroyer of Vatapi? There can be, then, no question as to Siruttonda having lived in the early years of the 7th century along with his master Narasimhavarman. But we have Sambandha's own evidence to shew that Siruttonda and himself were contemporaries. For in the last verse of a hymn celebrating his friend's native village of Sengattangudi, Sambandha distinctly says that it was composed at the special request of Siruttonda. †It is no longer therefore a venturesome hypothesis of mine, but a veritable historical fact, that Tirujnanasambandha, who converted Kun Pandya of Madura and rolled back the tide of Jainism in the south, *lived and laboured in the 7th century of the Christain era:* at any rate, it is a fact capable of as much direct proof as any yet established in the history of Southern India. This, then, is the remotest mile-stone we are yet able to plant with anything like scientific certainty in the history of the Tamilas. But it should never be forgotten that this, the earliest epoch for which we are able to assign a date, marks but the dawn of what is unquestionably the modern period in their literature. Not in vain, however, would this long and laboured essay prove, should the date which it has all along sought to establish, be found to offer a foothold for scaling yet higher in the neglected antiquities of an undeniably ancient and interesting people.

---

* *Siruttondanayanar-Puranam,* verse 6; "Mannavarkku tondê pôy vadapulattu Vâdâvi ton-nagaram tugal-âga, etc."

† Ramaswami Pillai's edition, p. 618: "Siruttondan avan venda." Siruttonda, meaning 'humble servant,' is evidently an assumed title. May not his real name be Ganapati, since his temple at Sengattangudi is called *Ganapatisvara?*